Mean What You Can't Say

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Ghost Radiation. An extremely toxic gas that if exposed to for a long period of time will effect a person's voice until he or she no longer has the ability to speak at all. Danny's hopes have run out, and not even his family wants him anymore...

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Author's Note

Prolouge

Hi everyone! Please give this story a try, and if it is good I'll keep adding chapters to it. If you like this part, I already have the real chapter 1 ready to put up. Thanks!

"There is no cure." A lean older man clad in white said softly "I am truly sorry, but there is nothing else we can do." Both parents in front of the doctor stood dead still "Your son will never speak again."

The woman, Maddie Fenton, put her small hands up to her face in an attempt to muffle the sobs that echoed throughout the hospital halls. Her kind husband Jack Fenton held his weeping wife close, his once energetic demeanor long gone.

They had no reason to question the doctor. There whole lives had been spent studying ghosts and nothing else, however less than three months ago that adrenaline of discovery had been replaced with constant worry for their youngest child. Now, after so much anxious waiting, their fears were finally being confirmed.

Unknown to Jack and Maddie, Daniel Fenton clearly heard his parents cries through the paper thin double doors. He grasped the bland white sheets placed over his body and immediately felt sick as his heart sank. Danny wanted to curse, scream, and yell at whatever god had made this happen.

Except he could not. Never would be capable of such ever again. Instead he closed his eyes tightly and let the silent tears cascade down his pale face.

Day 106

Thank you for the reviews on the short prolouge. Now begins the real story...

D~a~y~~1~0~6

Three months he had felt the pricks of needles against his pale skin as strange liquid was being mixed with in his blood like a blender.

Three months these people he only knew by mere names were constantly probing him with different medicines they promised would eventually help his rapid condition slow, although it never did.

Three months his parents, sister and very best friends had never ceased to worry themselves sick, however he had no way of comforting their troubled minds.

Three months of awaking to bland white walls in the same room every single day with no chance of leaving very soon that nearly drove him insane.

Three months later Daniel Fenton could finally return home with no hope left.

It felt surprisingly bizarre to leave Amity Hospital behind. After being treated there for such a long period of time, he didn't know how to feel when one of the young nurses told him he could return home. Sad would have been the most appropriate term, because if he could leave, that meant there was nothing else the doctors could do for him anymore.

Danny was an unsolved case that he bet doctors were more than happy to give up on, especially to ultimately ditch the confusion that drove them nuts. There were people he would miss of course. Several of the nurses that visited his small hospital room every day

smiled and chatted with him a lot. Even some patients enjoyed hanging out with the young teen. They had become his only friends when his family wasn't there to cheer Danny up somehow.

But even when his condition worsened and he could no longer communicate with anyone, somebody was always beside him. Although their faith did soften his aching heart a bit, no words would ever ease the rampaging storm that continued in his head. This tornado had brought only sorrow with it to deprive all happiness that Danny clung on to. Would it ever cease to torment him?

No, not at all. Nothing would ever be the same again. It was as if life had shattered right beneath his feet and was still plotting some kind of misplaced revenge. He could never go back to how things were before. Just him and his teenage ghost powers along with the friends and family that brought him such unexplainable happiness.

There wasn't a day that went by when he did not ask himself "Why?" over and over. Why *him*? Life had been so perfect before he was caught in this mess. Danny was such a great person, saving the people he loved and the wonderful town he lived in. He has a lovely sister and parents, the same for his two best friends. So why?

"*I guess bad things really do happen to good people.*" Danny smiled slightly at the mere irony of it all.

Suddenly, loud footsteps against the white tiled floors broke his concentration "Danny, honey?" his mom's purely sweet voice called as she entered the hospital room "Are you ready?"

He turned to face his mother and quirked a smile at the blue jumpsuit she wore. Then, when Danny opened his mouth to reply, he quickly realized with a pang in his chest that he could no longer do that anymore. Instead, he met his mother's now extremely sad eyes and nodded.

Since he hadn't brought any personal belongings to the hospital he had absolutely nothing to carry. It made him wonder what exactly he

was preparing for when his mom asked if he was ready. Maybe she thought he could wave bye to the staff or write a note for how much he wanted to thank the hospital. However, there was nothing to "say" despite how long Danny had been stuck there. They had failed to do anything for him in the first place.

Finally, Danny met up with his mom outside the room door and followed her silently down the several wide halls. He scowled inwardly, believing he resembled a lost puppy dog chasing after her. The feeling was completely terrible and his hands clenched tightly as he felt helpless. Although they loosened after a couple of nurses and patients alike said a quick goodbye to him. A few had even taken the short time to turn around and give Danny a tight hug.

By the time he was in the lobby, tears braced his face. The whole thing was so weird. One part of his heart was glad to finally ditch the place whereas the other wanted to cling to those people and never have to let go. Danny wiped his salty tears away during which his mom signed him out of the hospital for good this time.

Though he was sad, he never did look back.

The double glass doors automatically backed into their dark slots in the wall and let the morning sunshine through. Danny was blinded for a brief moment, then eventually forced himself to pry open his eye lids. The suns bright rays strung down from a clear blue sky and warmed his face. Birds chirped loudly as they sang their songs and wind lightly blew the trees and ruffled their spring leaves.

It was beautiful, yet he felt he did not belong. This kind of beauty needed no useless scum like him. All it did was mock him about how the world would always go on being as stunning as ever while he felt dead inside. Everything would move on with or without him.

His mother walked with a strong pace through the parking lot, except as Danny looked around for their usual Fenton Assault Vehicle, he couldn't spot it. Usually the bulging mass of steel and giant green 'F' on the side of the thing would stick out like a sore thumb. Well,

guess how surprised he was when his mom clicked an unlock button on her keys to flash a totally *normal* white RAV4 EV.

"*How much as really changed since I've been gone?*" The thought made him wince as his stomach filled with anxiety.

"This is our new car, Danny." Maddie spoke sadly as she opened the driver side door "I hope you like it."

As much as he thought the Fenton Assault Vehicle was a pain, he never knew how horribly bad he would miss it until now. Did they get rid of it? Danny quirked a confused eyebrow at his mother in hopes she would understand.

Thankfully she did "We had to get rid of the assault vehicle because of," she paused "*Certain* things. Go ahead, get in."

Shocked, Danny hesitated before he opened the passenger door and sat in the cars smooth leather seats. The clean smell of a new car still hung in the air, implying that they had just bought this. In his whole entire life, Danny had not felt so disappointed with his mom and dad. There must have been an obviously clear reason they got rid of the famous family vehicle, or maybe this was all just apart of the humongous "welcome back" party joke. They had always been immensely dedicated to their ghost studies and never once had it crossed their brilliant minds to actually discard of the family's favorite vehicle.

What else was different?

Danny noticed everyone he knew had an abrupt change of attitude. Sam and Tucker, friends since elementary school, seemed distant and sad. His older sister had worried herself till she was literally sick and throwing up. Maddie, his mother, had been altering between her nice blue jump suit to regular clothes like she didn't know which to decide. Even his own father gave up his upbeat personality to what might be the start of depression.

It made Danny believe that they had all lost hope that their son, brother, or friend would recover. But even his own heart had cracked when each of their fears had been brought out into the light. Danny remembered the doctors words so well that it was scary "Your son will never speak again." Six words that will haunt him for the rest of his life.

Now, instead of being excited, Danny was extremely nervous about returning home. Already he was witnessing the changes that had occurred while he was away, had never been aware of hardly anything besides what people had told him in the hospital. Just like he thought, life moved on without him.

Danny was a mute freak. Now after being gone so long, no one needed him anymore.

Day 106 Part 2

I nearly bawled my eyes out writing this chapter. Thank you all so much for favoriting, alerting, and reviewing this story! I really appreciate everything you guys do, for it encourages me to write more. I'll try to start updating once or twice a week from now on :D

D~a~y~~1~0~6 ~~2

His mother said nothing to him on the thirty minute drive back home. It was a fairly short trip, however it had already felt like eternity to Danny. Now that he could no longer speak, he had to rely on other people to start a conversation for him. Though even then he could only use the slight movement of his head.

The silence was driving him nuts. There was no radio usually jamming, no air conditioning or heat, and even the cruising car seemed awfully quiet. Every vehicle that slipped by theirs was a blur of streaks and colors in his mind, each one looking exactly the same as the other before them. Danny's heart beat loudly against his ears and was the only sound that kept his attention.

Finally, he swallowed a deep breath that hardened the panic clawing at his aching core. When Danny released it in a drawn out sigh, he closed his blue eyes and tried to think of a serene atmosphere. A place where he could easily put his soul into and mingle while his real body stayed in the car. Somewhere far off that only he could imagine, where nobody could touch or judge him.

Maybe a pond would be a nice place. He could see himself standing in the damp morning moss near the edge of a beautifully clear pond. Fog covered most of the landscape and prevented him from seeing the border of hidden birch trees whose prickly branches stuck out from the shifting mist. Red and yellow flowers poked randomly

through the ground along with slithers of weeds dancing to a slight cold wind.

Everything was perfect. The only noises evading his mind were the flock of birds chirping, flapping their wings in the air above, and the assortment of crickets or frogs with one last call to their mates. *'If only I could stay here forever."* Danny frowned in the day dream as the wonderful image flickered. He couldn't think like that here, it would mess the scenery up.

Instead, he turned to the person staring back at him in the calmly riveting water. The eyes his mother had loved since he was little now looked dark, lost of all happiness. His fourteen year old frame was skinny from not eating healthy enough and he had grown an inch or two in the past three months. Outside he hadn't changed much, however inside rain poured and tested the crumbling flood walls constructed of his emotions.

Danny kneeled right next to the pond and gently graced the cool waters surface with one of his hands. The soothing contact may keep his soul bonded to the bliss of his comforting imagination while he thought. The first day from three months, 106 days ago, was simple to remember. It was a weekend in December and he had woken up with a dully throbbing throat that would amplify in pain with a dry cough.

Teens become sick or ill regularly, so it didn't worry anybody at all. Everyone knew that he would recover quickly and be back to normal by the time school rolled around. They were wrong. Everyone was more then blind to the truth of what was happening to Danny. Even he himself thought the exact same thing ; "I'll be fine."

After a few blurry days of sour cough medicine and restless sleep, his condition only continued to worsen. Danny faintly recalled visiting so many hospitals that he had given up on counting. Every kind of doctor or nurse he saw lied to him constantly. They all said the same lousy excuse "You'll feel better tomorrow" with a cheesy smile that he was ashamed to believe in.

Each passing day his throat burned until he could barely speak anymore. That's when his mom put her foot down and finally took him to an emergency room in Amity Hospital. He stayed there until he wanted to puke at every white object he saw, pinch his nose with each toxic medical fume, and stay outdoors until he felt he was free again.

In the end, after sixteen days wondering plus ninety spent in that confined hospital, he left. Doctors all around the world had set there lives aside to come to Amity Hospital and 'study' Danny. He didn't go a day without hearing how remarkably unique his condition was, that only one person had been known to have it before him. Although he didn't care about that person right then, all he wanted to do was leave.

Danny Fenton had been diagnosed with a condition called Ghost Radiation. GR is an extremely toxic gas that if exposed to for a long period of time will effect a person's voice until he or she no longer has the ability to speak. It all made since in one last final blow. With Danny's counterpart "Phantom", nearly constant contact with other ghosts, and frequent trips into the Ghost Zone he was 99.9% positive to catch the horrible disease.

Apparently there are harmful chemicals ghost naturally give off as an invisible aura. If these are breathed in over a very long period of time, the chemicals slowly erode the voice box and it's nerves. The latter patient that had Danny's exact condition did not feel any throat pain until the last few months either, after that only a numbness was left over. The blue and orange jumpsuits that his parents used to embarrassed him with were lifesavers. It turned out that their terrible taste in loose spandex was the key to saving their own voices from corruption. Danny was so very thankful, for if they had caught GR, he didn't know exactly what he would do.

Abruptly, Danny felt warmth caress his cool right hand and baffle him. He jerked it out of the water, but the comforting feeling stayed. Danny re-opened his tired eyes and found that his mother was gently grasping the hand laying on his stomach. He looked back up at his

mother for some kind of sign, that everything would be okay, and instead saw a pair of grieving purple eyes.

She and his dad didn't blame themselves for this, right? Everything was his fault. They have absolutely no idea that their son is a ghost fighting maniac who has risked his life a bunch of times. Not to mention he is their prime target 'Danny Phantom' that his parents believe to be a town raging ghost. They were clueless and Danny really hated that.

'I can't even tell *them I'm Danny Phantom anymore. They'll never know the truth."* he fought the tears that demanded to be released and spent the rest of the drive looking out the car window. Outside passed a dozen of familiar houses, even a few people, that he knew well. The nice citizens, old buildings or Amity Park's small town community hadn't changed a bit, but Danny had.

Rumors had undoubtedly spread around about his current condition. Everyone would look down on him like a disgusting sewer rat without a place. Even his family acted strange. Had he been gone too long? Danny wasn't exactly sure whether to be angry at their carelessness or let the growing sadness ultimately overwhelm him. It would have been easier to just stay away from them all and retreat back to the glistening pond that made him feel sane.

The car stopped, however Danny's heart raced faster at his mother's next words "Were home, Danny." She then let go of his shivering hand, unbuckled, and got out of the car with her hesitant son following behind. The odd facade of Fenton Works was the same as ever. Aged red brick built the normal resembling large two story house as the humongous green and orange sign stuck out at the main front. What had always made the house different in appearance was the Op-Center, a technologically advanced upper area, with guns and lasers sticking in every possible direction that his parents had personally created.

"Are you ready, dear?" His mother stood awaiting at the front door, hand on the knob.

No, Danny was far from ready. His brain told him to run far away and face it another day while his feet began their slow walk forward. At last he was at his mom's side, and as she opened the door, he could feel himself holding his breath. The gray door swung completely open and revealed the unnaturally dark living room.

Danny walked further in as his mother held the door for him, and when she finally shut it he stood there, waiting for something to happen. All the lights had been turned out, curtains drawn, and he could barely see what was around him. There was a small sniffle, then another, as a man could clearly be heard crying elsewhere in the small room.

Listening closely, he was at last able to pinpoint the weeping near the right corner of the living room. There he could faintly make out the dark outline of the long couch he easily recalled and a heavy set person sitting at the far end of it. His mind threw out only a handful of ideas of who it could be. Was it his dad? Danny wanted to laugh at the thought. Never had he seen his dad crack a single tear in front of him ever before, especially not with the go happy attitude he had always carried.

His mother felt her way onto the couch and softly sat down beside the figure. She put a tender hand on his shaking shoulder while the other embraced his cheek to gently turn it towards her face "Jack," her voice cracked "O-Our son's home. See?" she pointed across the room to Danny "He's right over there."

"No!" His dad jerked his blood shot eyes away from hers as he stress out "No, I can't let him see me like this." Jack's hands fist together against his thighs and he put his head back down to the floor.

"But, dear-"

"You shouldn't have brought him home yet!" Jack yelled back at his shocked wife, though deep inside she ached to cry out also.

Danny's heart instantly felt heavy as quiet tears spilled onto his cheeks. Did his own father...not want him anymore? Was that what he's implying? Did his mother feel the exact same? That must have been why they had been avoiding him for the past couple weeks. Since their son could no longer speak, he would be a heavy burden for them to forcefully hold. Bile rose in the back of his throat as he was instantly filled with nausea. His head pounded fiercely and repeated a never ending loop of his father's very words. Again, he could not help to question himself further and ask 'why' continuously.

Maddie never turned away from Jack as she whispered "Why don't you go up to your room, honey?" her sudden sob nearly breaking off the sentence.

Danny didn't need to be told twice. He sprinted up the stairs hearing his dad mutter "Why, why?" all the way up until he was finally able to shut himself inside his regular old room and lock the door. Even then he could hear their haunting words echo through his head, along with many other questions that would pop up. Why him? Did his parents hate their only son? Should he have come home? Where was Jazz?

He ignored the fact that his room had been cleaned and flopped face down onto the comforters, delicately burying his head into the limp white pillows. Muffled sobs wracked his body and did nothing to relieve a painful tension that just tightened harder around his heart. A single daring thought sent lightening straight through his already broken heart *' Am I even suppose to be here right now?"*

Day 106 Part 3

Checks time I can't believe I'm posting this at 12:49am. Anyway, I have this story planned all the way out to Chapter 9 so far (but not written) and am very excited to continue it and also extremely happy you guys enjoy reading it so much. Thank you for everything! This is the final Day 106 chapter by the way. Make sure to pay attention to what number of day it is while this story is developed and posted.

D~a~y~~1~0~6 ~~3

Darkness. The infinite black stretched widely out before him and moved slowly in shifting smokey tendrils. He could feel it gripping at his clothes and young skin, desperately clutching onto then pulling whatever little light was left inside Danny's heart. Should he fight back? There was no more hope left for him. Not even his own parents had faith that their little boy would make it through this tough challenge.

However, no one could ever say that he had not tried so badly to act like everything was okay, that nothing had really happened in the first place. But this just seemed like wishful thinking compared to all the abrupt changes he had witnessed since coming home.

Danny could honestly say he's gone to hell and well, hasn't actually come back yet. At least that's what it felt like. Never ending emotional torment had been stricken upon his own family, friends, and especially himself. The future ahead only looked intensely bleaker when Danny attempted to imagine it.

He could no longer speak, so how would he communicate? Sign language? Except that just seemed like a waste of time and he didn't really want to force other people around him to learn it. Plus, Danny really didn't have the spirit to educate himself either. Writing was definitely a good option. It would require daily, nearly 24/7 access to

a notebook or some form of paper, but it would work. Yes, he would speak with his own scrawled hand script.

Ghost Radiation had not been studied very thoroughly and may possibly be more harmful then anybody would have thought. Danny could be dead by this time next year if the disease kills him. He shuddered as he stood still in the darkness, not enjoying the idea of death. Though what if it does? The radiation might be spreading even faster within his already frail body, gradually tearing him apart molecule by molecule.

He pondered if the people at school would sympathize or taunt him. Danny could see their fierce gazes summing him up now while they gossiped to their best friends about the kid who can't even speak. Such a pity that the people he had known most of his life would suddenly just turn their backs on him like unwanted garbage. That's how *some* people are though. One minute you could laugh with them and in the next hour they'll completely ignore you because of some mistaken cause.

One of the few people he still had hope in was his very own peculiar best friends, Sam and Tucker. Danny could simply not think of how life might be without them by his side nearly every day. They had been together for a very long time and he would trust them with his messed up life if needed. Had Sam and Tucker already faced the other way though? Nobody had come over to his house for a friendly visit, offer tickets to some type of gothic concert, or even show Danny the latest technologically advanced PDA that used to bore him to no end.

Now, all he wanted was company. Someone to 'write' to. His heart felt so burdened, as if a boulder was laid there a month ago in the hospital and it just kept getting heavier to carry. Danny was now fully convinced everybody had abandoned him. It made him feel a kind of loneliness that he had never experienced before in life. He yearned to cry but it seemed his eyes were crisp dry and he has finally ran out of tears to weep.

' I am alone. ' the thought made his heart ache. The scene was probably similar to the soap operas that played on late Saturday night television, however at this moment he could truly care less. Maybe his life was just one complete recording. He could just stop the tape whenever he felt like it and rewind everything that had happened to him so far. Erase the part where he had to sit in that dreadful hospital for three months, replace all those sad faces with fresh happy ones, and prevent the time he got his ghost powers that started it all.

Who would be the town hero now? If he had never went into that dumb Ghost Portal, he would have never been turned half ghost and infected with incurable GR. Danny absolutely hated his counterpart, though wouldn't that mean he also loathed himself? They were one in the same. Equal in an odd human-ghost manner that the other handful of halfas could only pull off.

' I'll never go ghost again. ' this in when things changed. After the thought, a bright green light blinded he's blue eyes and forced them closed. Fluttering back open, he saw a glob of green ectoplasm flowing in the illuminated black as if one. At first, Danny shied away from it, remembering that this substance also had the same chemicals which had robbed him of his voice. Then he relaxed as quickly, not caring if his condition could possibly get worse anymore.

More ectoplasm formed in many shapes and sizes among the now lit huge black dome. The ectoplasm pulsed lightly, some times allowing each form to pass or coming together in one bigger blob "The future is not set in stone, Danny." An eerie man's voice echoed from an invisible source.

A figure regenerated many feet across from him and Danny immediately felt goofy for not recognizing the voice. A young man with pale blue skin floated across from him, adorning a purple outfit and cape. In the middle of his chest sat an eccentric old clock that ticked calmly and in his hand a long staff with a pocket clock in place at the top. Red eyes stared at him with a somehow friendly accusing glare "You of all people should know that."

How glad Danny was to see Clockwork, he could not express. It had been quite a long time since he had last seen the Time Master, a time that he really did not want to revisit soon, and he was overjoyed inside. However the smile that had begun to break across his shocked features was soon replaced with an overwhelming amount of anger *' He knew all this would happen! '*

"Yes, Daniel." Clockwork said while changing into a wrinkled old man "I knew."

Danny's rage was coupled with confusion as the old man read his thoughts *' Can you read my mind? '* The ghost nodded silently and for the first time in 107 days, Danny felt he could actually speak clearly again. He was going to question how that was possible until recalling what was *really* on his tongue *' Why?'* he thought, unconsciously gripping his hands into hard fists *' Why didn't you tell me before? '*

"There is no question about 'why' it happens, it just does."

' This isn't like one of your lessons, Clockwork! ' the other man's emotionless face un-nerved him. How could he act so calm? Why didn't he tell Danny this whole big mess would occur? *' I've lost almost everything. If you would have told me... '* He held himself back from blindly lunging at the now chubby cheeked kid ghost.

"You wouldn't be the same person." Clockwork held Danny's desperate gaze "This is only apart of life, which flows freely with no since of time. Even I can not foresee where all life leads." he paused "No one can."

Without warning, everything started fading to black. The green ectoplasm lost all it's glow and soon disappeared, then Clockwork dissipated along with it ' *Wait! Clockwork, please come back! '* his words were to no avail. Somebody was shaking him away from the realm, when all he wanted to do was stay in that one area where a mere ghost could make him feel a bit better when engaging a conversation with him.

Danny awoke with a sharp gasp and sat up quickly on his bed. He must have drifted to sleep accidentally for a while. Had it all really been a dream? All these thoughts were put away when he felt arms wrap around his body and caress him in comforting warmth, a thin form obscuring his vision. Long strands of red hair fell in front of his face that smelt of a very familiar lavender shampoo he could never forget *' Could it be-? '*

"Welcome home, little brother." Jazz's soft voice cracked from all the joyful crying she was doing. Danny did not hesitate to wrap his own arms around her in a brother-sister hug. He could only recollect a few lost memories of them hugging, but this was the first one where he actually wished the embrace could last forever.

Everything may be alright now. His own sister still loved him no matter who Danny was or if he was able to speak or even hear right. He was her little brother and would protect him no matter what. Usually he would have complained about this, claiming that he was no longer a baby and would be fine by himself. Right now he regretted those words, for he ultimately had his sister to keep him company now.

Danny softly eased himself from the hug and jumped from the bed excitedly. After giving Jazz a 'one minute' hand signal, he rummaged around in his unorganized bedroom drawers for two very important key supplies. At last he was victorious to a half sharpened pencil and a plain yellow notebook he had never used before.

Sitting back down on the bed, with Jazz sitting Indian style beside him sharing a smile, he began to quietly scribble on the first page of the notebook *' I missed you so much. '*

Then he held the notebook to Jazz and, instead of speaking what she had to say, she gently took away the paper and pencil to write her own neatly written words *' It's been too long, hasn't it? '* To him, waiting all that time for a diagnosis when he wished for the sheets of his own comfortable bed and home had felt like eternity.

Danny nodded sadly as they traded out once again *' I love you, Jazz. Thank you for being here. '*

' I'll always be here for you Danny. ' Jazz wrote back, a determined yet happy look set on her face.

Day 107

What is this? A *double* update in one weekend? This is longer then the others too! Le gasp! xD I wonder what will happen when Vlad enters the story...

Before you read I just wanted to mention that this story does take place some time after The Ultimate Enemy. Just incase you did not know :)

D~a~y~~1~0~7

It all started with a castle. Yes, that was perfect. Danny scribbled a few more shapes onto the blank paper as his own tale began to unfold. Tapping the pencil lightly against his knee, he thought of what to draw next. He glanced at the open blinds as a crack of lightening shot through the dark gray clouds and left a trail of smoke in it's wake. Rain barely sprinkled against the glass, though everyone knew from recent weather reports that this would soon turn out to be a violent storm.

Unlike most people that would rather bask in the hot sun's rays, he preferred rain. The sound of it had always calmed his mind and made concentrating much easier. No matter what day it was a soft feeling tingled in his heart whenever the the skies always began to darken. He felt like he could do anything as long as the climate favored the so called depressing drizzle.

Danny shifted on his bed and returned his full attention to the paper, which was also the second page in the yellow notebook he had to carry around. A few misshapen rectangles were put together to form a small castle that barely filled the center of the page. Usually he wasn't into drawing or creating some type of happily-ever-after story, but he had plenty of time. Jazz would not be home from school for at least ten more minutes, plus he felt a bit bored anyway without his

sister around. Doubting it would get finished, he shrugged and haphazardly continued the story.

Along with a great castle, there was a large kingdom surrounding it to be precisely in the middle of its people. However many of the citizens were poor because of the kings greed. Much of them lived in unsanitary shacks and had to sit outside each day and actually *beg* for their meals. One young teenager in particular longed to help his family with their wealth. His father was gone away, mother extremely ill, and sister to young to help at all.

He was at the right of age to finally be a castle knight. Although he would rather shovel horse manure then be apart of the dreadful king's personal army, he wished for his only family left to be nothing but happy. After weeks of inhuman training that many struck out on and gaining the trust of the official soldiers there, he became a knight.

For the scene slowly unraveling in Danny's thoughts, he tried his best to draw a little knight in armor out front of the castle and tiny little houses around the structure itself. The new knight was taunted and prodded daily by other soldiers that were clearly attempting to make the skinny peasant leave. Alas he stood strong, determined to reach his goal without any un needed distractions.

Only a few months after being recruited, the king declared war against another civilization North of their kingdom for mistaken reasons. The knight dared not to question the dictator and was to be sent off with the next battalion as soon as possible. Before leaving, he said goodbye to his nine year old sister and sick mother with no money to give them.

The army marched confidently forward with no doubts burdening their already nervous souls. The knight was quite sad though , for the king had never given him the money to help his family. Would he give it to his troops when they returned? He held onto the pull in his heart that represented the ever lasting love he had for his kin and put on a brave face.

Unfortunately, the enemy won that bloody battle. Several hundred men had been murdered in the king's once massive rebellion, the young peasant knight among them. His relatives did not hear of their little warriors courageous death until days later. The enemy soldiers took over the king's place on the throne with a terribly ferocious rule that had the people praying for the original bitterness of the old king. Nobody was ever content again.

' The end? ' Danny questioned his own judgment with a frown. Added to the cruddy picture was an elderly king wearing elegantly crafted clothes being stabbed by another man with a long curly beard. Blood dripped in a gray puddle from the sword and it's fatal wound in the original brutal king. Danny's pencil pressed hard against the paper as he drew bold 'X's in place of the dead knights dark coal eyes. Least to say, this wasn't exactly the right ending he wanted it to be.

His pencil tip broke with a sharp *crack* against the filled paper *' I guess not every story has a happy ending. '* he smirked at the irony *' Mine surely doesn't '*

A knock suddenly sounded from the other side of the white bedroom door "Danny," his mother's voice sounded muffled until at last she opened the door "Dinner is almost ready." For once, she was wearing plain gray baggy sweat pants and white t-shirt instead of her usual blue jumpsuit.

' How odd. ' Again, Danny was rattled at how much had changed since his return. Rarely he saw a jumpsuit, although he wasn't positive about his father, around the house now. Heaviness settled on his worn heart, except he just nodded and looked away from her hurting purple orbs. She stood there for a moment in silence, arms crossed and shoulders hung carelessly, then left without another word.

Danny took one last look at the drawing and ripped it from the notebook. He crumpled the paper up then threw it across the room to land in the trash bin. Although he didn't have much of an appetite,

maybe if his mom and dad could see how well their son was doing, that they wouldn't be so sad any more. He could strap on an invisible mask to cover up the desolate creature crying out inside for their sake. It was worth a try, right? He would do absolutely whatever it takes to make his parents feel good again. Even if it meant breaking down his own self esteem in the process.

The plastered fake smile on his face stayed while he sprinted down the stairway to the kitchen. At the stove, his mother was mixing corn in one pot and in the other was green beans. A strong scent of cooking chicken filled the air as it was being baked in the oven "Give it another minute, honey." Danny nodded again, but instead of leaving decided to go over to one cabinet and help get the plates out like he used to.

Apparently that was a wrong move. Maddie gasped loudly and rushed over to where Danny stood dumbfounded and slammed the cabinet door closed, shaking the glass plates with in it. Her eyes were wide with panic as she pointed her finger and sputtered nonsense "Don't do that, Daniel! You were perfectly fine when you did nothing! We have it under control now, alright?"

He stared un moving at his ballistic mother with scared wide eyes. Never once had he felt fearful of his very own mom before. Was she saying that they didn't need him anymore? Does she really believe he's handicapped or disabled, that he's better off doing *nothing*? Her eyes stared him down like a dog that just peed on the new carpet. Danny nodded quickly, then turned on his heels and ran. Where, he was not for sure.

Thoughts ran through his head rapidly. Part of her sentence just didn't seem to be directed toward getting plates out. No, it was toward the current situation with their mute son. Danny felt he had drastically under estimated his mom and dad's feelings. They may think they have it under their control when they really don't have themselves right either. His mom wouldn't yell at him for doing a nice favor ever before, which means that woman up there was a complete stranger. She could not have been his mom.

Danny found himself blindly going down a dark set of stairs, wondering if he could actually just run away from his sadness. He entered a large metal plated area with tiles covering its expansive floor area. Work benches sat empty on all sides of the cavern, along with packing boxes filled to the brim with unusual electronics. Danny's breath caught in his throat *' Is this the lab? '*

It couldn't be. The mere thought that this dusty old place was the ghost lab was impossible. But, as his eyes spotted the Ghost Zone portal, he knew it was true. Instead of seeing Fenton devices sloppily scattered everywhere with tools and green ectoplasm goop he only saw brown shipping boxes piled in any nook or cranny available with labels slapped on them saying *Garbage Disposal*.

The ghost portal's yellow and black doors were tightly shut with orange duct tape slashed over them. Danny remembered to breath again and sucked in stale air that made him cough. It looked like the place had not been touched or cleaned in months. Were his parents getting rid of their ghost stuff? *' No, no. Not possible. Please don't let this happen...'* he hugged his aching stomach, hunger long gone.

He forced himself to walk to one of the unsealed packages, trying desperately to ignore the label's scrawled words. Lifting the four flaps revealed what lied beneath and made tears spring to his eyes. Most of their ghost hunting equipment was there, including the infamous Fenton Finder, Ghost Gabber, and laying in the mess of it all were his mom and dad's wrinkled up jumpsuits. He picked the rubber clothing up in both shaking hands, then squeezed them against his chest and let his tears fall freely.

"Danny?" his father's confused voice abruptly echoed in the metal chasm. Danny turned around to face his father, who at closer examination was slumped over in a chair at a darker corner in the room. The dim flickering lights gave him a hard time to see his dad's own form. He had not been able to take notice of it before, but it seemed like his dad had lost quite a bit of weight. Instead of a usually bulging tummy it was sorta slimmer under the navy blue shirt he wore.

Danny hesitantly used a now very familiar head gesture and hoped his dad could somehow see it. Without meeting his son's mournful gaze, he spoke in a near whisper "I'm a fool, I always have been." he tried his best to stifle a sob "If we had never began ghost hunting, y-you wouldn't be like *this*."

Jack Fenton lifted his head and revealed the dilated blue bloodshot eyes that looked as if they belonged to an insane person, not his dad "I'm so sorry. So, so sorry." Danny would have comforted him, said some cheesy words that would have made his dad feel like a million bucks back then, except he couldn't. Like his mother said before ; he was better off doing nothing.

At that moment he felt entirely helpless. Jack and Maddie Fenton, his own dear parents, thought it was their fault for their son's lost voice. Did they not know that he didn't blame them? It wasn't there fault! No, *he* was the one that stepped into the ghost portal that day long ago and *he* was the one that decided to be Danny Phantom, a human freak with unnatural powers. If anyone should be sorry, it was him.

Not being able to take anymore of his father's words, Danny bolted up the stairs to his room and vowed to not come out again that day for fear of what might happen. He sat on the edge of his bed and gripped his fists angrily. Why did they have to take the blame when it wasn't theirs to begin with? How many times would he have to sit up here crying in his room, alone and confused? There was no reason for tears. Danny was a strong believer that crying did nothing to solve his problems now. Whining about what occurs was just a waste of time.

Faintly, he heard his door open and close long after his tears dried. Danny could smell his mom's wonderful cooking tainting the air, making his stomach do flips. His fears instantly melted away when he looked up to see his beautiful older sister sitting aside two plates of steaming hot food on his dresser with a smile on her face "Hey, little bro. I brought up some food for us."

Having her in his presence was all he needed then to feel better about himself. For once since yesterday, he truly smiled and nodded gratefully. Rushing to pick up the notebook he had thrown on his pillows and a new pencil, he wrote while she moved both of their plates carefully to where Danny was seated on the bed *' I'm so glad your home. '*

Jazz gave Danny his food, which he sat on his lap, and finally flopped beside him with hers. When she read the note, her eyebrows knitted together with a bit of concern *' How was your day? '* she replied as they switched out similar to yesterday.

Danny didn't immediately write back, which was when his sister could tell something was wrong *' Dad and mom have changed a lot. '* was all he could muster before nibbling on a few pieces of delicious corn.

' They're completely different people now. ' Jazz grimaced as she handed her brother the notebook.

' It's because of me, Jazz. I'm the one that have caused them so much grief. '

Surprising her brother, she shook her head and managed a small smile *' No, Danny. It's not your fault and never was. Being part ghost wasn't something you chose to do. One day mom and dad will realize what their doing and stop blaming themselves. Maybe you will never speak again, but no matter what happens you'll* always *be my little brother. '*

Danny felt his heart flutter when she gently grabbed his hand. The warm feeling stayed there even after Jazz removed it to silently begin eating again as he did the same. It wasn't an uncomfortable silence that would have drove him to leave, but rather a calm one. Even with the flash of lightening, ground shaking thunder, and pounding rain on his glass windows, Danny remained peaceful. He wanted to share this moment with his sister as long as he could.

Day 108

Sorry I didn't upload yesterday, but I was gone the whole night. Special shout out to VampireFrootloopsRule for actually posting some questions that actually made me think about the story, then straighten out a lot of plot gaps. Also, I would love to say a big thanks to all of my readers out there as a whole!

D~a~y~~1~0~8

BEEP!BEEP!BEEP!

Danny turned over in his bed, pushing himself farther into the dented pillows in hope that the extremely annoying sound would disappear from his efforts. Unfortunately it continued to beep loudly throughout the bedroom until he finally reached a blind hand over to slap the alarm clock's snooze button. In the process a cold gust of wind hit his warm body and he immediately scuttled back under the tangled comforters for heat.

Who's bright idea was it to invent alarm clocks anyway? He could already imagine some old guy from the 1800s or whatever waking up one day with the great urge to invent an electronic box that forces people to get up early. The things were just plain irritating. Even more so when it was half way across your room and you had to get all the way up. Luckily for Danny, it was just an arm reach away on his nightstand.

Keeping the covers close to his body, he only brought his hands out for a second to rub the dark bags under his eyes. Little or no sleep had come to greet him since the dream of Clockwork had occurred a few days ago. Everything the time ghost had said stuck to the back of his brain like super glue. *' The* future is not set in stone, Danny. ' is exactly what he had said in that all knowing voice of his.

Clockwork had known that this would eventually happen to the young boy, that he would be infected with Ghost Radiation and permanently loose his voice. Although he had a strong feeling the mysterious time master did not know *when* it would happen. The thought struck him as odd. Clockwork was supposed to be wise and powerful with the ever present knowledge of what was already going to occur. But had he somehow been blocked from seeing Danny's own unhappy future?

BEEP!BEEP!BEEP!

With an angry grunt, Danny threw off his sheets into a messy heap on the floor and stood directly in front of the alarm clock. He nearly broke the sliding *on-off* buttonas he pushed it over frustratingly. He absolutely loathed mornings. Most teenagers hated being forced to wake up early while others just plain despised them with no clear meaning. For Danny, it was the loneliness.

Even then it was dead quiet in the house. No one was talking or laughing downstairs in the kitchen with each other, not a snore could be heard echoing in the narrow halls, nor was there a single creak that the old stairs usually emitted in protest of people's weight. Just silence. This time it was an awful silence, one that could drive someone over the edge of sanity.

Straightaway Danny tried to think of anything he could to avoid the noiseless environment. Usually he would have strangely talked to himself or focused on any sound that would occupy his mind for a moment. However, there was nothing. Even the birds that were typically outside chirping at his window were vacant. Was the world playing some kind of trick on him? It felt as if everything was closing in on him and somehow knew about his muteness, mocking him about it.

Rage was replace with an overwhelming amount of paranoia. Danny could feel his hands shaking in fear as he gripped them into fists. Heart becoming increasingly tighter, eyes widening slightly, he knew he had to do something to keep himself busy. If he didn't he had a

feeling he'd be stuck there all day, staring at that alarm clock while his hidden thoughts, fears, and sadness corrupted his frail mind.

The last thing he needed was to be as traumatized as his poor parents were. Danny *had* to be there for them as they were by his side when he was little. It was a bit backwards, since the parents were *suppose* to be there for their children, but he did not mind at all. Staying strong willed and sane would be top priority around Jack and Maddie Fenton from now on. After what went down yesterday, Danny was totally positive that he mustact one hundred percent cheerful for their sake.

If this didn't work...well, at least he could comfort himself with the mere fact that he had tried. Still, the guilt of not being able to really do anything at all was heavy. Danny was only fourteen, not even an adult yet, and he had already gone through more than most people have. Infected with horrible contaminants, unable to speak and with no true faith left, he promised to push forward until everyone around him was happy. No matter what though, he would never have the wonderful privilege of living like a normal teenage boy ever again.

He pushed his eye lids harshly together, a familiar wetness already waiting to be released, and forced his mangled thoughts away. After straightening out the comforters on his bed he proceeded into the bathroom. Throwing on some jeans and a t-shirt, brushing his teeth, Danny stopped and looked into the small square mirror. There was his reflection, staring right back at him. He almost looked the same as he had been all those months ago. *Almost*. His blue eyes were ringed with a faint black from loss of sleep and lightly dulled as if they had been permanently damaged. Did even his eyes loose their reason to shine?

Danny shook his head lightly, then finally left and stepped out into the hallway. His head immediately snapped to the far end of it. There were two doors, one to Jazz's room, then another at the main end which belonged to his parents. A woman's soft crying could be heard on the other side. How Danny longed to go open that door and hug his mom, whispering only soothing words to calm her fragile heart,

however the door was locked. After the kitchen incident he wasn't sure what to do for her.

Jack stayed down in the lab all day except for his occasional trips out to eat a bit or even use the restroom. Other then that, Danny rarely saw his own dad. He stayed down in the darkness like a rat, amongst his ghost gadgets and other supplies. Was it that his own inventions comforted him? No, that couldn't be right. As far as Danny knew, his parents blamed themselves for what happened to their son. So why did his dad feel so drawn to the weapons downstairs?

With great strength and guilt on his shoulders, he turned away and descended down the stairs. Danny opened the blinds to brighten up the still house as it turned ten o'clock. Sunlight peeked through the gray clouds outside in an attempt to make up for the rainy weather. A lot of flooding had been reported state wide, but nothing too bad. According to the local weather station they would be seeing more sunny days soon after all the rain clears up tomorrow.

On the kitchen table sat a little slip of paper with somebody's neat cursive hand writing on it *' I'll be home late. Have a great day little bro! '* It was signed by his sister and made Danny smile. He was thrilled with the knowledge that his sister had not forgotten about him while he was away at the hospital. There was a memory buried deep into his brain of Jazz, literally sick with worry for her brother. Not even he could begin to imagine how much joy she felt when he came home.

For once in quite a while, Danny actually dug out a bowl and poured a bit of cereal halfway in it. Lately he hadn't had much of an appetite and completely avoided eating, though being reminded of his sister's gratefulness, he decided to make an exception. Taking the first bite of the sweet cereal heightened his senses and in less than a few short minutes he had gulped down the whole bowl. The food felt absolutely great filling up his very empty stomach. It was sort of disappointing to see it all gone, however when Danny was about to pour some more, the door bell rang.

The sound made him jump as it took him a few seconds to recognize what exactly the noise was. Danny had not heard a door bell ring in, how long? His heart thumped against his chest. Who could it be? Somebody that wanted to see him? He begrudgingly sat down the cardboard box of cereal and gently strolled into the living room. The bell called for the second time, but all he could truthfully do was stare at the doors plain surface.

What if someone wanted to talk to him? He couldn't speak, so how would he reply? Danny mused, thoughts mingling together then tampering with each other. Before he wouldn't have hesitated to simply open a door. Now he was fearful about what might happen next. It rang a third time, snapping him out of his pounding head and bringing him back to reality.

Danny nervously clenched the sleek golden door knob with his hand and twisted it. Light spilled inward as the door opened inches more in what seemed like a lifetime to him. When the visitors were at last completely revealed to his very shocked blue eyes, he gasped out loud and stood dead still. A boy and girl his age stood awkwardly in front of him, their own eyes downcast. Danny swallowed hard and looked back and forth between his two best friends as he managed to speak "Tucker...Sam?"

Day 108 Part 2

Before You Read : Hey...I bet I surprised everyone with last chapter's ending lol. I'm not going to change it or anything, but let me just say that it was a typo. I know, right? How exactly can you mess up that! Anyway, after freaking out about it for an hour, my wonderful sister helped me revise my plot and make everything work out. So a big 'thank you' to her. I promise the next chapter will be better, however I had to update now or I would not have been able to until Sunday. Enjoy!

D~a~y~~1~0~8~~2

Pain. Extreme aches that struck his throat in a matter of seconds. It felt like he just swallowed a gallon of toxic acid, burning the walls and inflaming them. Danny grasped at his neck area with both hands in hopes the cool pair of palms would reduce the immense amount of pain that coursed through his esophagus. His blue eyes widened to the size of quarters as a series of violent coughs pierced the spring air. At last he fell onto both knees at the door, hacking and holding his throat.

He thought he heard Sam's worried voice through the chaos and someone kneeling at his side while Tucker stood dumbfounded ahead. The same question was being repeated in their head *' Was that Danny? '* he was thoroughly shocked at the odd situation. He was mute, destined with the cruel fate of not being able to speak, so who just did? A small hand could be felt rubbing soothing circles against his back as he was slowly able to breath again. The pain left a harsh after effect sitting in his throat and every time he swallowed it would hurt worse then having strep.

"Danny, a-are you okay?" Sam stuttered as her mind went into overdrive.

'I'm fine-' he tried to speak again, praying to whatever deity that was listening at the moment to help him say anything. However only a strangled noise emitted from his trembling lips and the coughing returned with a vengeance. Instead of comforting his best friends minds, he managed to trouble them further. Danny's eyebrows knitted together with confusion. That *had* been his voice right? While Sam continued to sooth his aches with just her simply amazing touch, he replayed the moment through his head once again.

The door had opened to reveal Sam and Tucker, two people he had been dieing to see for the past two months. Danny had been in complete shock and at the same time utterly joyful inside to see the gothic girl and techno geek he had always hung out with before. He doesn't exactly remember how, but his lips moved only to say their names in a tight whisper. The young male voice had sounded worn out and a bit scratchy after not being used for such a long amount of time. 108 days to be precise.

On shaky feet he attempted to stand, his head a dizzy mess and body swaying. At last Tucker stepped forward, putting Danny's arm around his shoulder, and helping the obviously weak teen into the house. They all momentarily sat down on the long white sofa in an uncomfortable silence that made everybody's ears buzz lightly. Danny's sharp breaths were soon reduced to soft puffs of air being inhaled and exhaled. It felt weird being there with his best friends beside him, although he was glad they had come.

"I'm so sorry, Danny." Sam clenched her small hands into fists "We just-"

Tucker cut her off "We didn't know anything to say that might have made you feel better."

"You must hate us..." she trailed off and hung her head.

He shifted in the plush cushions and glanced around the room, a smile stapled onto his face. There was a yellow notepad and pen on the living room glass table that Danny reached for. Sam and Tucker

watched with mere awe as their friend grinned at them. Wasn't he mad that they had not contacted him in the last few weeks? They thought he would yell at them and demand an apology, except he was far from feeling hatred. In fact he resembled that optimistic friend that they knew long ago. Danny scribbled on the parchment *'Thank you guys for coming.'* He did not dare to try and 'speak' again, for what if the pain returned even worse this time? His buddies were here and that's all he needed right now, people that actually accepted him for who he was deep inside.

Sam took the pocket sized notepad in her hand and read as Tucker looked over her slim shoulder. Tears instantly sprung to her eyes, Tucker's too. Whoever said boy's didn't cry was absolutely wrong, because they let loose so many salty tears then that he was sure the house would flood with them. He had been able to forgive them and without question, they had accepted it. How could he not? They were his best friends. No matter what the circumstances were, Danny would always forgive them and never doubt his acceptance. In seconds Danny had brought them both into his awaiting arms and hugged them tightly, not wanting to let go of this moment. No other words were used, only emotions.

When they all pulled back, everyone had a knowing smirk playing on their beaming faces. Maybe these horrible months have just been an unpleasant dream. He could have been into an accident and just awakened from a long coma. Yes, that had to be it. Everybody was happy to see him awake. There was no possible way for him to feel this good right now and have no heart ache whatsoever. It reminded Danny of before, when nothing was wrong and things were exactly how they should be.

Unfortunately, the cheerful feeling did not last for long "What about your voice, Danny?" Tucker's words destroyed his smile and threw his mind into a frenzy. He was sadly still in the reality that he hated *so* much. Sam handed the notepad back to him, though all he could do was stare at it while he flicked the pencil back and forth in his hand. Could that have really been his own voice out there?

The whole scenario was excruciatingly painful to recall. Those professional doctors had declared that he wouldn't be able to ever speak again. Danny Fenton was *supposed* to be mute. As far as he was concerned, we should not be saying anything. He wrote at a snails pace, trying to write his thoughts then crossing out words until the easy sentence was mutated *'What if I'm not totally mute like they all thought I was?'*

Sam met his eyes curiously "What do you mean?"

'I might be able to talk.'

"Please, don't." she shook her head wildly, short black hair tossing around "I don't want to see you hurt like that again."

Several questions raced through his mind on a rocket, leaving other thoughts behind then collecting them back up into one big idea. It was crazy. An idea that dared him to do something he had not done in quite a while. Danny felt a bit frightened to even do it, what if he was wrong and could not really speak? He was positive that what had happened had not been a coincidence, but fate.

"What are you planning to do, man?" Tucker was curious as Danny eased himself off the couch and into the middle of the floor. He stood there, head down to the carpet, and contemplated if he should turn back now or forget it ever happened. Perhaps he had been day dreaming and the cereal earlier had made him ill. The part of his mind that was still struggling for focus thankfully forced all his speculation backwards.

Danny sucked in a bit of air that tensed his heart into one big mass of energy, then released it along with his worries. Holding up his arms up high above his head he thought *'I'm going ghost.'* Pure white rings formed in a circle around his waist and expanded as they consumed his body in a bright glow. A black jumpsuit was revealed with a large white 'D'P' logo proudly posted in the middle of his chest. His blue eyes turned a dangerous radiant green and hair snow white as the rings traveled upward over his now white gloved wrist.

He was turning into the very thing that had contaminated him with Ghost Radiation; a specter, apparition, entity , monster, but most of all, a Phantom. The strong glow outlined his new form and he inspected it with slight disgust. This was what had deliberately robbed him of his voice and made him mute. Or so he thought. Did he dare try to speak again? As if a reminder, the aches came back for a mind numbing second while he pondered what to do next.

Danny winced and glanced toward his friends. Tucker and Sam were looking at him with concern, ready to be at Danny's side if he needed assistance. They both wore encouraging smiles and were silently urging him to proceed onward. Yes, this was the reason he had to keep going in life. His friends, parents, sister, and all those who ever doubted him would be proven wrong today. It might have been really rough for a while, but now everything came down to this one point. This moment was his.

Despite the pain that could hit him at any moment, Danny opened his mouth and was surprised at what nearly inaudible mumble came out "Did it work?" The voice, clear as the blue sky, could be heard only by his own ears. No extreme aches could be felt clawing it's way up his throat or causing him to cough. Was he imagining this? Eyes wide, he said louder "I can speak."

Tucker and Sam exchanged utterly shocked looks with him as they all took in the mere three words. A smile slipped onto his face in triumph "I can speak!" he shouted in glory. There was no scratchy edge to it either, just words filled to the brim with absolute joy. He could feel his adrenaline rising and he began to shake while tears ran freely down his cheeks. Bringing both hands back into his vision, he observed them and brought both into a tight quivering fist. Could Danny only speak while he was Phantom?

Day 108 Part 3

Thank you all for being so patient with me and for your kind reviews! I went ahead and deleted the Hiatus message on here. Also, I promised that as soon as I was better to begin more chapters so : tada! This is actually one of my favorite chapters so far. Day 109 will be posted on Sunday :) Btw I promise Vlad is a major part of this story...just not right now. Soon, very soon.

D~a~y~~1~0~8~~3

The abrupt pounding of feet rushing against the upstairs floor gripped Danny's happiness in a cold glove of fear. There was only one person he knew they belonged to, someone who had never seen her very own son this way before. Panic squeezed his heart as he quickly glanced to the stairs and saw a lean woman sprint two steps at a time. Sam stood up instinctively, using her body as a shield and whispered "Change back, now!" a harsh edge in her voice made him frantic. Alas, he hesitated.

Finally...finally he could speak once again. After days of listening to his own unnerving silence, being jealous of the people who talked freely around him, and unable to comfort anyone that mattered to him. Danny figured out that he *can* speak as Phantom. A single thought struck him like a rusty stake being driven through his beating heart *'Did Clockwork know this would happen?'* There were so many questions he had unanswered...

"I-I can't." Danny replied quietly and mentally willed himself to turn intangible. He could not change back to his mute human self now, not when he just regained the most crucial thing he had lost so far. Instead, he silently watched the scene unfold before him. The worst part was trying to keep all his thoughts from spilling out vocally. After thinking everything, or even writing it down, he found it difficult to

keep sentences to himself when his speech worked perfectly fine in this ghostly form.

Maddie nearly lost her balance as she slid on the carpet and tried to desperately catch her breath "Did you hear that?" her voice was unbelievably hysterical "I thought I heard-" she stopped. It was the first time Danny had seen his mother since the haunting kitchen incident yesterday. She was unusually dressed in light blue jogging clothes, similar to the color of her old jumpsuit he was so used to seeing her in. Maybe not all was lost after all. His mom still clung onto a part of her past life ; even if it was *just* a color.

Tucker shook his head "No Mrs. Fenton." then, sensing he should elaborate more of exactly why they were both in her living room said "He invited us in and headed in the kitchen for something." He shifted on the couch and peered behind Sam, knowing that Danny was there and gave him a wink accompanied by a slight smile. Maddie was looking off toward the kitchen, moving from foot to foot. Had she heard his joyous outburst earlier? Sam smiled politely at his mom "It's nice to see you both again."

However, her nice comment to ease tension died on deaf ears as Maddie walked briskly into the lab where Jack stayed. Danny sighed in relief when she at last closed the heavy lab door behind her. He became visible again "Thanks guys, I owe you one." his teenage voice had not yet ceased to amaze him.

Sam turned on him suddenly, a frown plastered on her face "Why didn't you turn back into human?"

"Yeah," Tucker stood up and joined them "That was way to close, dude."

Danny's green eyes flickered back and forth between his two best friends. He could always trust them, no matter what. Why did he keep forgetting this? A nervous hand came up to scratch his white hair "I dunno, I just..." he paused as he attempted to find the right words "I just couldn't." Plain and simple. He could not go back yet

and turn into the quiet helpless person he *once* was. Casting a nervous glance at the abnormal metal door, he said "Look, I'll tell you about it upstairs. We should probably avoid getting walked in on again."

When Sam and Tucker nodded in agreement, he took their hands in both of his. He was easily able to expand his outer ghost energy and generate it into his friends bodies. Danny turned all three of them intangible and flew off the ground, up into the ceiling. Even before all the sick chaos had occurred, he had always enjoyed flying. His friends were weightless behind him, although he could still feel the pull of their forms as his energy was strained a fraction. In human form, their body masses would have prevented him from doing this, but in ghost mode his heart was where all the strength and power came from. Mere muscle could only get him so far as Phantom ; the will of your very core is what mattered most in the ghost world.

They zipped through the hallway and ended up in Danny's small bedroom less than a minute later. Sam and Tucker could be seen again when he immediately let go of their warm palms. Tucker snickered "I will never get used to that." and plopped down on the soft twin bed comforters. Sam casually leaned against the white wooden bedside drawer and smoothed out her black attire. Her curious purple eyes met Danny's anxious ones "I think I understand why you haven't changed back yet."

"It's kind of obvious, isn't it?" he laughed sadly, until it grew louder and sounded more like a maniac cackling. He sounded crazy. Although it was *a bit* funny. All this time Danny had been able to talk and just when he figures out he can speak, it is only in ghost mode. Of course Ghost Radiation would not have effected his Phantom counterpart. How could he have missed that little detail? He could talk through the very thing that made him mute.

"Um, are you okay?" Tucker asked his friend. He himself could not help to wonder what in the world was happening to Danny. He made a move to get off the bed and confront the poor guy, but Sam marched forward and did it for him.

She planted herself right in front of him and grasped both of his shoulders, shaking him "Listen to yourself, Danny!" he stopped laughing, catching her harsh tone as they locked eyes "This isn't like you." Sam let her arms drop to her side and held Danny's confused gaze. He watched as her purple eyes went from a hard anger and morphed into a softer concern.

He frowned "I'm sorry. It's just that, everything is so messed up." Danny swallowed as he felt a rough ball of emotion rise in his throat. For the second time that day, he raised his white gloved hand up to his face, palm facing upward, and squeezed it into a tight fist. This somehow reminded him that he was in fact still connected to the real world. He gazed at his friends and realized that in reality, he wasn't really alone.

But they would never be able to go back to the old days. Ghost fighting was a thing of the past for his friends. Danny gasped loudly and cursed himself inwardly "Never let me do that again!" he nearly yelled at them.

"What?" Tucker gazed at Sam for help to only receive a lost shrug.

Meanwhile, Danny continued to mentally slap his face "I can't let you guys be in contact with Ghost Radiation too. Just now when I turned us intangible, that could have been the end of you!" His hands rested in his face as he realized the severity of the situation he had been putting them in from the day he got his powers. His feet began to pace back and forth on the imprinted carpet. He didn't know what he would do if his friends could no longer speak because of him!

Straightaway there was a petite hand caressing his shoulder. Danny stopped and lifted his face from the dark crevices of his palms to see Sam's hand pressed lightly on his main upper back and Tucker right behind her. They both shared the same smile, even though their nerves were shot skyward. But they would do anything to see their best friend as he was before any of this mess started. Maybe Danny's friends were only two people, however they had already

done so much for him over the years and was here now when he needed them the most.

"I think we'll be fine. Maybe we weren't exposed to Ghost Radiation as much as you were, Danny. You are part ghost after all." her smile faltered, then regained it's confidence "Only *part* ghost. Otherwise, we are all human in our own special way."

Tucker beamed "We'll be with you all the way until the end."

"Besides, you have bigger things to worry about." Sam inputted.

Danny nodded. He knew that they were talking about his parents "Should I tell-"

There was a sudden knock from the other side of his bedroom door and his mother's voice rang out "Danny? Danny, I'm coming in."

Without another single word, Danny begrudgingly urged himself to change back to human form. The familiar white rings appeared from air around his waist, one moving up while the other descended down across his legs. His stylish black jumpsuit was replaced with normal clothes and his proud 'D'P' logo with a large red oval. He opened his mouth to say something, though instantly gulped whatever he had thought about saying. *'I need to remember I cannot speak while human.'*

Maddie Fenton walked in and stood awkwardly near the opened doorway. She appeared to be a bit shaken up, her eyes never meeting Danny's "I-I have some great news honey." His mom's voice cracked as she put him on edge with every word "It would be best for you to get out of the house while me and your father..." she paused and dropped her sentence, making Danny more nervous by the second. Finally, she sighed and put up a visible ruse to act happy about what she was about to say "Your returning to school tomorrow."

Day 109

Liked that evil cliffhanger, eh? Well, you'll love this one then! There's a lot of thought in this chapter (which some say can get a bit boring at times) but please keep an open mind and enjoy the new chappy :)

D~a~y~~1~0~9

This moment could very possibly be the most gut twisting thing he had ever been a part of. Nothing could compare to how much dread was curled around Danny's frantically beating heart. He shouldn't even be doing this, slowly making his way up the sidewalk and getting closer to the one place he absolutely hated; School. What were his parents thinking? That he'd walk in, maybe make some more friends, and actually regain some normalcy in his hectic life? The mere thought of being an ordinary teenager was unusual in itself. Well, it had always been a dream after his ghostly counterpart was fused into his human half.

The second his mother had uttered those shocking words, Danny wished he could have turned into Phantom and yelled at her until his throat was raw. He would have conversed with her, asked questions and demand answers, however he had been forced to suck down his anger. Listening was all he was able to do. Maddie had explained that it was best for him to get away from the house and enjoy other peoples company for a while. That her son would be better off learning out there instead of being crammed in the bedroom all day.

Even Sam and Tucker were surprised. Like truthfully good friends, they had vouched for him. Unfortunately his mom would have none of it. She used to be so welcoming, but this time Maddie made an easy excuse to kick them out of her house. Danny remembered all to clearly the pitying glance of Tucker's light blue eyes and Sam's hand confidently squeezing his trembling shoulder. When Jazz returned home that evening, he took his new secret and painfully stowed it

away. Instead, his kind sister comforted him about returning to school "I'll be there every step of the way." she had whispered ever so softly.

Inside Danny knew what was wrong though *'Mom and dad must want me out of the way.'* his eyebrows furrowed together in concentration *'But why?'* For what reason would parents try to get rid of their son or daughter in any situation? That's right : nobody would. A mother and father are supposed to love their child unconditionally. Except, he felt as if the emotional cord between his parents was drastically weakening. The loving connection Danny believed to have understood all his life was shattering in his mind's eye. With every shard of broken glass, there went another vital piece of love throughout the family.

He looked up and tried his best to spot the late morning sun through an arrangement of dark gray clouds. Danny would be late, but why does that matter to him now anyway? Maybe by the time he arrived, school would be long over and he could simply return home. If his mom wasn't stable enough to home school him, Jazz might do it herself. He abruptly swallowed the growing lump in his throat as he at last faced the Casper High school building. *'This might not be so bad'* Danny attempted to calm his racketing nerves while walking up each concrete step *'I just need to keep a low profile.'*

Danny's hand shook as he gripped the sun warmed metal handle on one of the double doors. It groaned in protest as he slowly opened it and was greeted with a short entry area that branched out into two separate hallways. He tried to keep an open mind as he stepped into the deserted right hall. Classroom doors were placed among one side of the wall while there were several lockers on the other, at the end were a set of stairs that led to the second floor. Danny opened a particular door labeled 'Office' and walked inside, waiting impatiently for a middle aged woman to quit typing on her computer. Was she expecting him to say something?

Thankfully she wasn't "You must be Daniel," the secretary checked the screen, not taking notice of his disapproving face. He absolutely

hated being called by his real name "Daniel Fenton, correct?" before he could even force a nod she had dug out a class schedule and handed it to him "We just began third period, and lunch is during fourth. Use your new schedule to get around." Apparently she had nothing else to say and began typing furiously on the computer once again. While standing outside in the hall he looked carefully over his classes and, as he expected, they were the same ones before he had become ill.

Which means that his third class was Mr. Lancer's. Oh how he remembered this teacher so well. The overweight English teacher had always been very strict, though otherwise caring toward his own students. Hardly anybody in the entire high school had seen Danny in over three months since he last left with a harsh sore throat and nurses excuse. Neither the student body or teachers here know what he has gone through, what's really happened, since he was put into that miserable hospital bed. Danny inhaled deeply and faced the door that would decide how the rest of the day went. Would everyone accept him or ignore him? Either way, he had no control over his own fate.

The door swung open to reveal Mr. Lancer giving the class a daily lecture "I'm serious, people! How could a quarter of you fail my exam?"

Instead of paying attention to their teacher's 'important' speech, nearly every head in the class turned to gawk at who just walked in. Danny shifted uncomfortably on his feet *'Relax, Fenton. You can do this.'* However, the several pairs of eyes looking his way made him feel like an alien life form that just walked in and asked to use the bathroom. Many began to lean over their seats and whisper in another person's ear, though it was quite obvious they were talking about him.

Mr. Lancer's face fell "Great Scott!" he gasped, joining the group of speechless onlookers. Danny caught Sam and Tucker smiling at him confidently across the room. Their twinkling eyes urged him to go on, except his feet were glued to the carpet and his brain kept telling him

to run away repeatedly. He stepped toward his silent teacher and, after digging around in his pocket, handed him a note that his mom wrote out. Danny knew the yellow notebook paper told about his current condition, how he was diagnosed with Ghost Radiation and practically *disabled*.

The teacher's features contorted into something of sympathy, an emotion Danny didn't really want, and Mr. Lancer spoke "Er- I understand. Go ahead and take a seat-" he scanned the small room "Right over there next to Sam."

Danny shuffled through the arranged seats and plopped down in one that just happened to be in the middle, where most turned to look at him strangely. He sat the lone yellow notebook that he had been carrying on the cold desk, dug out a green mechanical pencil from another blue jean pocket, and tried his darn best to disregard some of the people around him. Had they never seen a human boy before? They sure did act like it. Seriously, he was here to get a healthy education just like everyone else in the school.

"It's very nice to have you back, Danny." Mr. Lancer commented with a small smile. He cleared his throat to get the class's attention "Alright, back to where we were."

He struggled to return the grin. It was difficult to pay no attention to a lot of the students who would look back at Danny for a few seconds, a kind of curiosity in their eyes, and go back to Mr. Lancer's teachings. His feet shook nervously against the floor as he finally decided to open his notebook to the third blank page. Tuning out his teacher's lesson on *'To Kill a Mockingbird'* , which he had never read before, Danny pumped the led out of his pencil and started doodling. Although he wasn't the best artist in the world, he enjoyed seeing exactly what his imagination could assemble. The school bell finally rang three times in what seemed like no less than ten minutes. When Danny set down the pencil and gazed at his drawing, he realized that it was the 'D'P' logo that Phantom wore on his chest.

'Am I really that desperate,' he thought sadly *'To hear my own voice once again?'*

"Come on, dude." Tucker exclaimed beside him, lightly nudging Danny with his elbow "We gotta get to our next class!" Danny nodded and closed the notepad.

With Sam silently encouraging him on the left and Tucker talking about the latest hot girl on the right, he walked down the crowded hallway. A few of the bustling high school kids glanced Danny's way and stopped to talk to their nearest peers. This time he was able to catch a bit of what they were saying besides the commotion echoing in the hall.

"Hey, isn't that the Fenton guy?"

"They say he lost his voice for good."

"That's awful!"

"He was never cute anyway."

"I feel sorry for him."

Danny desperately tried to shut them all out of his mind and pay attention to his friends in it's place. Part of the population despised him even more since he had left, the other large amount felt nothing but pity for the mute teenager. Others even talked about whether they would bully him or not anymore while several didn't care at all. He felt terribly out of place and had a feeling that it would only get worse as the day went on. Perhaps Danny should leave and permanently forget about this place for good until he was forced to come back.

But, what would his parents think? Would they be disappointed in him for not trying? Danny *had* to act like he was okay for their sake. Staying home and giving up on any occasion was not an option *'I have to be strong.'* and he was determined to. He and his friends at

long last arrived in their empty Spanish class with the exception of the teacher, Ms. Sanchez, sitting placid at her desk. She glanced at all three as they put their school books down on the desk that belonged to them "Have a good lunch." she said with a welcoming smile.

"You too." Sam replied alone.

While slowly making their way toward the cafeteria, the goth turned to Tucker "Why didn't you say anything back to her?"

Tucker held up his hands in surrender "She hates me! One time, I got a fat D- on one of her tests. Since then she's always looked at me all weird and stuff." he shivered mockingly "It's creepy." Sam raised an eyebrow while Danny cracked a huge grin, wishing with all his might that he could laugh with Tucker.

Pushing the double cafeteria doors open, Danny immediately rather be at home rather then a packed out area such as this. All the freshmen students he had ever known were here in this one huge room. All the tables were filled with people talking to one another and chomping on a piece of tasteless food in between. There was a short line at the food counter which Sam and Tucker dragged him to. His grip on the yellow notebook tightened as he reopened it and scrawled *'I'll meet you guys at an empty table.'*

"Your not gonna eat?" Sam asked with concern.

Danny shook his head and, without anything else to write, left in search of a table. He shrunk as close to the wall as he could while scoping out the area until someone caught his eye. Dash sat across the room and had looked away from Paulina for a split second to see his old punching bag sauntering near the far wall. The bully appeared to have gone through a growth spurt since Danny had last seen him. His blond hair was combed back as it always was, a fierce glint in his eyes saying that he would hurt somebody at any time, and the red and white football jersey seeming to gleam without a drop of dirt on it.

Same Dash. However, that also meant that he was the same bully. Danny couldn't shake the feeling that those harsh emotions directed toward him had not changed at all. Maybe Dash had heard the rumors that Danny no longer had the ability to speak and would go easy on him from now on. Maybe the moon was made out of cheese. Paulina noticed her friend's eyebrows clench together and actually ceased bickering to investigate for herself. She saw the teenager in question frozen against the cafeteria wall and seemed to say "Are you looking at that loser?"

Although he couldn't hear her, Danny had heard Paulina say this to him so many times before that he could understand how her lips moved when saying this particular sentence. When Dash nodded and began to get up, heading his way, Danny realized that he could not take it any more. The confusing stares, people gossiping among themselves, the sympathetic looks he kept getting...it all finally overwhelmed him. He took off in a dead sprint and ignored the cafeteria lady shouting "Hey, no running!"

In less than a minute he was out of the school doors and running endlessly down the town sidewalk. Danny could feel wind rushing wildly through his black hair and barely noticed the light sprinkle of rain against his cheeks through the tears. *'I'm so sorry mom...dad.'* he thought as the chilly wind picked up to where the tears released were nearly dried *'I've failed you both.'* He didn't care about how the school would call his parents in an angry fit, that every single student had silently judged him today, or that he let down his friends. All Danny wanted to do was go home ; the last place left where everything was at least partially normal.

Relieved that he had reached his house, Danny slowed to a quick walk and breathed deeply. He jogged up the stairs and hurriedly turned the knob to open the door. When he was at last inside the cozy home, he slipped his shoes off and was about to bolt upstairs before his mother's voice made his feet turn into concrete "Danny? Why are you home from school so early?" He actually didn't blame her for asking a question he had no possible way of replying to this

time. What really made his skin crawl and mouth gape, was the man sitting on the couch between his mom and dad.

"Nice to see you, little badger." Vlad Masters greeted with a mischievous grin.

Day 109 Part 2

So, I'm posting this at exactly 12:58am and wouldn't let myself rest until I had this chapter posted lol. I would like to thank all my wonderful readers for their ongoing support and am overjoyed that a lot of you like reading MWYCS. Also : Yes, I do love killing everyone with cliffhangers ;P Enjoy the new chapter!

D~a~y~~1~0~9 ~~2

Running home to see your greatest enemy sitting comfortably in your house with a steaming cup of tea is not what one would expect to see after a hard day. Actually, no normal human really assumes this unless they have some type of freak powers like Danny. The moment he gazed upon the silvered haired man wearing his fancy little suit and sinister grin, he knew that Vlad was up to something. He was *always* scheming a type of evil plan that would either kill Jack Fenton or make Danny his very own adopted son and successor. This only brought his own eyebrows to furrow in anger and a tight frown appear across his wet face.

"Honey," his mother's voice was sweet, although a bit on edge "Why are you home from school so early?" this made the second time she's asked this particular question. Danny's scowl changed as a flash of remembrance shot through his pounding head of what had happened at school. What exactly *had* happened anyway? He couldn't even recall anything but the harsh whisper of voices that still carried along in his ears. One thing was for sure though : the students had undeniably marked Danny a total weirdo.

He drew the rain pelted notebook away from his chest and wrote in tiny letters *'I couldn't handle it.'* Maddie sat on the couch without a single word, gently caressing the bright yellow cover and reading the sentence repeatedly. Danny felt a harsh pang of guilt in his heart when disappointment visibly crossed her face. Could he do nothing

to make them confident of their son again? While he found great interest in his sock covered feet, his mother shifted on the couch. Danny expected a long speech about how he should be trying harder rather than running away from his fears, however that was what the *old* Maddie Fenton would do.

Instead, Danny watched as she pushed herself off the couch without another word. When he finally met her purple eyes, he didn't see a proud Fenton. He saw a broken woman with tears streaming down her face and orbs that were filled with a great deal of devastation. She quickly crossed the room and thrust the notebook into his chest while passing by him. It fell limply to the carpet floor, the owner to shocked to realize that his very own mom might have given up on her son at last. Maddie raced upstairs, each harsh step felling like a rusty dagger being wedged into his chest. He clenched his trembling hands into weak fists when a bedroom door slammed shut and echoed throughout the silent house.

There was nothing he could do for her. Danny resisted the urge to rush up the stairs and hug his mom until she was okay once again. But, he had attempted every single thing in the book. Attending school although his stomach lurched at the very thought of it, helping out when he was able, and acting like everything was alright even though his life is being pulled apart string by string. What else could he do? Danny wished he had never caught sight of that terribly pained face. The image of his mother, wounded inside with a shattered heart, was burnt into his brain and played similar to a cinematic movie.

"Well, that was quite odd." Vlad declared with a sigh. Danny's head flashed the man in an instant, a hard glare written on his face. How could this man just sit here and be adamant to what had occurred? Actually, it was like Vlad *enjoyed* watching the young teenager's faith dwindle and whither away into black ash "Now let's continue with our discussion, Jack." The man being addressed seemed to snap out of a trance as his college friend reached out and tightly grasped his

meaty shoulder. His father's eyes were lined with black circles that indicated how much sleep he had received in the past few days.

Jack Fenton straightened up a bit "Oh," he hesitated "Right."

Meanwhile, Danny was clueless. Since when did Vlad Masters visit them to create a conversation? Unless he had a poker card hidden up his sleeve and a plan scrawled in black sharpie marker across his very mind. The older man glanced at him, a frown covering up the all knowing grin that dared to slip past his unyielding features "You might want to stick around for this, Danny." Although he wanted to be anywhere else *but* sharing the same breathing space as Vlad, he complied. He was curious of what they were talking about, especially if it included him.

Danny picked up his sprawled notebook, whose pages were bent from the impact, and sat right in front of the glass table in the floor. The particular spot was far away from Vlad and close enough to his dad. He worried that if he sat beside his father, he would leave the room and bolt straight for the dark lab downstairs. This was the first time he had been able to sit beside his dad, in the light, and actually see him clearly. Jack had on a plain white t-shirt that showed the fat rolls of his stomach and a regular pair of blue jeans. No orange jumpsuit that covered his body from neck to toe and constant exciting gossip of the paranormal.

"Danny," Jack winced a bit at saying his son's name. Also a unique moment for him, for it had been long weeks since his very father had said his name out loud. He would have been overjoyed if the grief that came upon the plump man's face had not suddenly reminded Danny of his mother "I d-don't know how to put this..."

'Put what*?'* Danny thought nervously *'What are you trying to tell me, dad?'*

Vlad cleared his throat quite loudly, urging Jack to go on. His father looked shaken as he quickly uttered the words "Your going away for a while."

His heart constricted at his dad's sentence. Going...away? Vlad's mischievous smile had returned, however Danny hardly took notice of this. For a moment it was only him and his father in one room. Nothing else mattered but what Jack had said. He couldn't wrap his head around what had just passed through his ears. Rapidly, he flipped open the notebook to a blank page and wrote one word *'Where?'* his hand's were shaking so much that he could barely read his own print. The mechanical pencil tapped anxiously against his knee as he waited impatiently for an answer.

"To Vlad's house, in Wisconsin." he stated this so plainly, like his son switching homes did not even matter anymore.

Danny's whole world shut down, the pencil frozen in mid air. To Vlad's house? Vlad Masters? This wasn't good...in fact this had to be the worst moment of his life now. He wanted to jump up and punch Vlad's stupid grin off his face and teach him a lesson, except his limbs were numb. Did this mean...his mom and dad were getting rid of him? The flood walls built in his eyes collapsed as cold tears fled down his face. He sat there, staring straight at the glass table and observing his own desolate reflexion. It reminded him of the beautiful pond he had dreamed of while on his way home from the hospital. If only he could be there right now instead of here.

He didn't care if Vlad was satisfied at seeing him break inside or not. All he cared about was the fact that his parents didn't want him. They had no use of incapable scum like him. Danny had more than likely only been in their way this whole time, a mute boy with no hope belonging to a family with a better life to live. Maddie and Jack Fenton have felt the blame for everything that's happened to their son, so by getting rid of him, they can discard of their own guilt. How messed up is that? Apparently it was logical in their heads.

Maybe he was wrong and this was just some kind of nightmare. Danny was asleep in his bed right now in the real world, dreaming about what his future may or may not hold. Clockwork might have tweaked around in his head and found the most disturbing content available. Probably for another one of those life lessons he kept

getting from the old ghost. This one was about not being afraid of what's to come. That he could face anything as long as he had the courage to do it. Then, he would wake up to another rainy morning and be thankful that it was *just* a dream.

'No,' Danny let his head hang, shaking it sadly *'This is real. All of this is happening right now.'* He looked back up at the two men in front of him. Jack sat impassively on the couch with Vlad whispering words near him that Danny could not hear. Had his hearing also failed him? Least to say that he wouldn't be surprised. No longer was he curious about what they were saying behind his back, for all he wanted to do was leave this place and never return. Be on the run the rest of his life while Vlad and his family kept searching for him to no avail.

A few mere sentences escaped from their quiet conversation that he could make out.

"When does he leave?" Vlad asked cautiously, a hint of excitement within his voice.

"Tomorrow evening." Jack replied while wringing his hands together.

"Excellent."

At last, Danny simply had to leave the room. He trudged slowly up each stair, not knowing exactly what to feel. Should he feel betrayed that his mother and father are ridding themselves of him? What about sadness and the fact that he had unsuccessfully helped his parents? A million questions zipped around in his cranium like airplanes flying in a disastrous thunder storm.

Ages had probably passed before he reached his room and began wondering about Jazz. She was part of the few people assisting Danny through this tough time, right by his side whenever she could be. Sam and Tucker would always be his friends no matter what the situation may be but, miles and miles away from all three of them was just too difficult. There was so much to take in with little time to

do so. He had until tomorrow evening to *write* a goodbye to everybody. Unless, he told Jazz about his new secret.

In a rush of anger flowing through him, Danny slammed his bedroom door closed. He was satisfied to hear the loud crack of splintering wood in the paneling that followed soon after. Tears rushed passed his eyes that voiced his frustration as he crossed his arms in defiance. What was he suppose to do? Wait until tomorrow when he'd be forced to leave his own home? If his parents wanted to throw him out of their lives, then fine. Danny will abide by their wishes for them. They might realize their mistake later and come to retrieve him. Yes, they had to!

With a heavy sigh, he tossed his notebook onto the bed and raised his arms above his head *'Going ghost.'* he thought. The familiar white rings appeared as they had yesterday and started to engulf his body. He went to the bathroom mirror and looked as his face. Startling white hair, bright green eyes, and his D'P' logo that marked the hero of Amity Park on his chest. The only features different were the tears that still clung to his pale cheeks and the new glint of hatred in his neon orbs. Danny would go to a place where he was actually needed ; where he was free.

"Where I can be me." he said softly.

After checking to see if the door was locked, he turned intangible and flew up past the roof into the open air. A cold gust of rain pelted him in the face as the town's onslaught of Spring rain continued. Danny realized that he didn't care though. He let his thoughts blow away with the wind and allowed his mind to be cleared as he flew through the sky. His wispy black ghost tail whipped in the harsh breeze, but with his thin arms stretched out in front of him it was easy to maintain control against the weather.

He didn't know where he was going and in which direction, rather he flew anywhere he wanted. There were no people to judge him out here about how he can't talk or tell him he doesn't belong. Because out in this outfit he was Danny Phantom, town hero. How odd it is

that complete strangers would accept him, however his own family could not. Danny closed his eyes and was glad that he could not distinguish rain from tears for once.

Day 110

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving today! This would have been uploaded earlier in the week had I not been so busy. I was planning to end it differently, however this chapter is already a page longer then it should have been so...the next chapter will be up sometime this weekend! I also noticed I hit over 100 reviews after posting chapter 10! Thank you all so much! I read every single one I get and take all your opinions into my heart :) I never knew my first DP fanfiction would be liked so much. Thank you again and enjoy!

D~a~y~~1~1~0

This is the day that his life will at last collapse in on itself. A life filled with bravery and such extensive happiness was forced inside a dark cocoon crafted of black thread. Gradually it withers away, the vividly unique light that once shined dying out during the time of less than four months. Actually, today was number 110. Take those many days and an assortment of incomprehensible sorrow to get the wonderful outcome of misery. Returning to the old times were impossible now that he was so far gone and passed the point of turning back. Especially when everything was just...wrong.

While he flew threw the rain yesterday, Danny had attempted to recall what life had been like before all this chaos occurred. He faintly remembered that failing a test in Lancer's classroom was the downfall of his day while being together with his best friends always managed to lift the dark clouds from his shoulders. Then there was ghost hunting, which had taken up most of his time, and his parents bringing up his bad grades every so often. Right now he'd give anything to hear his mom and dad bicker about Danny's responsibility to do the chores or ground him for spending too much time on video games.

However, this was nothing more than a dream now. He could barely visualize the past. When ever Danny tried, it was constantly fuzzy and the images resembled that of an ancient monochrome film. Unfortunately, the only events he could bare in mind were those of the last 110 days. In this amount of time his life had done a complete spin around until he didn't understand which way was right or left. When he started counting the days by in the hospital, Danny had no clue that his sickness would last this long. Weekdays such as Monday or Tuesday reverted into plain numbers that he had begun to make a habit of going by instead. Although he used to hate math of any form, he now believed that numbers made something in his hectic life a bit easier.

The night before the evening he was supposed to leave was horrid. Danny paced silently around the bedroom, back and forth in the pure darkness. He can't do this. Living with a person like Vlad Masters for who knows how long is insane. For goodness sake, the old man's his dreaded arch enemy! If only Maddie and Jack Fenton knew what their own mute son felt. Instead of giving him a chance they have chose to send him away from his home. For how long? He's not even sure himself.

Even thinking of his mom and dad is hard. He shouldn't even call them those respectful names anymore, for they are not worthy of the gentle titles. Normal parents don't ship off their children and get rid of them. If Danny ever wished to be an ordinary teenager, this was one of those rare moments. His blue eyes tightened together as he continued walking nervously '*Get a hold of yourself!*'he shook his head and stood dead still '*I have to do this for them. I have to.*' Maybe if he stayed away long enough, his parents would come to realize their drastic mistake and come running to Danny. Then, they would never cease to tell him how much they love their son no matter what happens.

Yeah right. When he had returned home after his luxurious flight through a cold rainstorm, Danny had decided to simply walk through the front door. He had hoped that his parents, who were both seated

on the couch hours after Vlad left, would notice how he resembled a wet dog and be furious with him. Except regardless of how hard he slammed the door and faked a few dry coughs to get their attention it did not work. They seemed incapable to tear their unfocused eyes away from whatever bland object that was held within their gazes. Were they *ignoring* him? Now that they are about to take care of the problem, would Danny's parents avoid him until he was finally gone?

He sauntered into the bathroom and flipped a switch to activate an intense orb on the ceiling. For what felt like the millionth time, Danny leaned over the counter and took in his features. Dark bags hung visibly under his somber blue eyes from overall lack of sleep. His face was pale, and he bet money that if he lifted his shirt up someone might be able to see the faint outline of his ribcage. It's not that he refused to eat or had a sort of disorder, no this wasn't the case at all. Really he did try to eat, but whenever he did a nauseous feeling would replace the hunger and make him want to hurl. This had been going on for months, so he saw no reason to truthfully worry about it.

This was him ; Daniel James Fenton. The reflection that his family wanted to rid themselves of was right here. A parents imperfect son ruthlessly twisted in the harsh hands of fate as he slowly dies on the inside. It made him sick. The person in front of him was hardly similar to the old Danny Fenton that everyone loved. Face contorted into pure anger, he come to terms that his mom and dad absolutely loathed both his human and ghost side. He watched unblinkingly as white rings caressed his body and he willed himself to go ghost without any warning whatsoever.

Danny Phantom, Danny Fenton. What difference does it make? His ignorant parents are too stubborn to notice that their son risked his life every single day before he caught that terrible sickness as a ghost. They didn't know that when one of them would threaten to rip a ghost apart molecule by molecule, he stood by and gulped down the terror that swelled up inside him. Not only had he lost his mom and dad's love, however he was also loosing a piece of himself as

he stared at this *despicable* other worldly form in the mirror. If he hadn't walked into that ghost portal and allowed a monstrosity to be wrapped so tightly around his DNA, Danny wouldn't be in this godawful situation!

In one swift movement, Danny Phantom had brought his gloved right fist forward until it connected with a extremely loud *crack* to the mirror. The force was so strong that a few shards of glass escaped it's place and landed amongst the bathroom tiles. He kept his head down, hair brushing gently against his face and lungs desperately gasping for air. A single tear crept down his face and landed on the floor when he lastly took one good look at the shattered mirror. Danny had implanted his fist where his face would have been, the glass dented inwardly to surround it. Cold ectoplasm blood made his glove turn green and began to seep through out the various spiderweb cracks.

"I am what they hate." he whispered only to himself "Mom and dad really don't want me anymore." Danny still couldn't grasp the harsh concept of these words.

Abruptly, a cell phone ring pierced his ears. The noisy source was outside of the bathroom and emitted from his wooden bedside table. Who would be calling *him* in the middle of the night? He hesitantly drew his aching fist away from the ruined mirror, grabbed the nearest towel and stuffed his bleeding hand under it. In the back of his mind, Danny knew that the wounds would heal in a few minutes from the power his ghost half gave off, although that still didn't stop him from worrying if his parents had heard all the ruckus.

He at last picked up the Razor gray cell phone and gave a tentative "Hello?"

"Danny?" Sam's voice sounded slightly concerned for her friend. Meanwhile, he almost collapsed on the floor at hearing her sweet voice. Just like that, something inside of him snapped and a humongous ball of emotion erupted. Tears sprung from his eyes and onto his cheeks as sobs wracked Danny's body. He fell onto the floor

in a ball, back resting against his bed, and stared at the illuminated cracked glass in the bathroom. No matter how much it hurt him to clench his right fist under the towel, he had no doubt that he deserved it. Danny would take any punishment given to make up for all the mistakes he'd committed in the past.

"S-Sam, I don't k-know what came over me." he stammered along, faithful that she understood him.

Rather than discuss the disturbing events of school like she had intended, Sam focused entirely on what Danny was trying to say "Shh, it's alright, Danny." she tried her best to calm him down "Just tell me what happened."

Through many tears, Danny finally told Sam what had occurred when he ran home yesterday. He could hear her light breathing on the other line and immediately knew that she was listening. When he choked up on his parents expressions, Sam encouraged him to keep going by reminding him that everything *will* be okay. How he hoped that she was right. All he had thought about since those disturbing events was living with Vlad. But right now, it was just Danny and his best friend talking to each other as he confided in her.

There was silence. In the spare time he glanced at the clock and was fairly surprised that it was already ten o'clock in the morning "Sam, I honestly don't know what to do. He'll be here soon..."

"What time?"

"Around four this evening. Why?"

"Well," she said thoughtfully "Me and Tucker will come over before then and be there to say goodbye. How's that?"

With a new spark of hope, Danny replied "That sound's great! Thank you so much, Sam." There was something on his face that he had not felt in quite a while. It stretched his lips from ear to ear and made

his heart tingle with happiness. He was smiling. A true, genuine smile had found it's way onto his lips.

Sam might have been grinning too "I'm not gonna miss out on getting together with my friends."

After hanging up a minute later, he felt a bit more confident about leaving now. As Danny held on to his happiness, only nice thoughts would stay in his mind. He tried his best to close the bathroom door without taking one look at the cracked mirror. He tried his best to dismiss the throbbing pain that coursed throughout his whole right limb when he changed human again. At last, he tried his best to remain content as he begrudgingly inched out into the hallway to check for any sign of two particular people.

Danny was relieved to hear absolutely nothing. He quietly made his way down the steps and into the kitchen, where he opened a cabinet to reveal boxes of cereal. Maybe his stomach will agree with dry cereal for once. Pouring half a bowl of Lucky Charms, he sat down and began to nibble on the food with his fingers. Danny's stomach growled in anticipation at being fed. No worries made him nauseous as he finished the bowl quicker than usual. Just when he was scooting off the wooden chair and about to retrieve the box, a door bell echoed throughout the house.

'*Are Sam and Tucker already here?*' he questioned hopefully.

However, when he opened the front door with a smile, it soon disappeared when seeing the silhouette of an older man. The sun had crawled it's way past dark clouds just enough to outline the man in bright light and temporarily blind Danny. After blinking several times, he was able to make out the arrogant smirk of Vlad Masters. Vlad held his clad black arms behind his back and observed the boy from cold midnight blue eyes "Hello, Danny!" he greeted in delighted sarcasm "Your just the person I wanted to talk to."

He quirked an eyebrow at his arch enemy in silent bewilderment. Vlad shouldn't even be here, at least not until later. Danny's recent

happiness shrunk to the size of a dried up raisin while he continued to stare into a pair of leery orbs. Maybe he could get away with slamming the door right into his face and never face whatever Vlad's next step was in the diabolical scheme he had planned out. All Danny has to do is make a move before he does, then he'll be spared the unpleasant visit with him. A million gears were working in his brain and trying to figure out exactly what to do.

Luckily, neither of them had a choice "Danny? There you are." Jazz came bounding down the staircase to her little brother's side. Even her joyous smile faded quickly at the sight of Vlad standing impatiently in the door frame "Oh- Hi Mr. Masters." she welcomed him in with a quick wave of her hand. Although Danny was slightly perturbed at his sister's rather swift salutation, he closed the door and stood anxiously by Jazz '*Why did she invite him inside?*'

"Ah, Ms. Jasmine." Vlad said with sweetened words "You've grown taller since I last saw you." Danny's stomach did flips while Vlad's presence grew undeniably awkward.

Jazz shined him a proud grin, obviously fake "Thank you. But, why are you here this early?" she frowned and looked him over intently "Your not supposed to pick Danny up for another two hours."

"Yes, but I thought it better to go ahead of schedule and get the little badger." Vlad sighed "I am, unfortunately, very busy and have loads of work to finish."

'*He's lying*.' Danny thought fearfully, tightening his shaking hand around his sister's. Jazz was glaring at Vlad while he took a seat on the couch and watched Danny edge his way behind her still form. Finally, she replied "We'll be right back." Jazz grasped his hand and began to walk briskly past the older man until she paused for something on the living room table. He didn't know what she had picked up till they'd reached the kitchen and a very familiar yellow notebook was pushed into his hands. Jazz gazed at him in complete sadness "It's up to you, Danny. I don't know what to do now." she

had been caught off guard for once and was stricken by Vlad's unexpected stay.

Danny grabbed for the nearest writing utensil and wrote '*I'm not leaving yet. I promised someone that I would be here.*'

His sister read over the scrawled words carefully before saying "Alright, if you don't want to leave yet then that is precisely what you write to him." He couldn't help but smile at Jazz's confidence before flipping to another page, writing one sentence, then ripping it out of it's binds and crumpling the paper up into a thick ball.

They returned into the other room and found Vlad seating expectantly where he was before. Danny tossed the ball directly at his head, where it gave a soft *thunk* in advance to landing right in his lap. Vlad's face was contorted into the utmost dumbfounded expression Danny had ever laid eyes on, which forced him to stifle a giggle. While Vlad opened the wrinkled paper as the teenager across the room, standing hand in hand with his sister for what may be the last time, repeated what had been written in small words across the paper '*I won't leave without one more goodbye to my friends.*'

Day 110 Part 2

I feel like my updating dates are off now ;) Plot reveal next chapter? Hmmmm, maybe. Thank you all for the support and enjoy the latest chapter!

D~a~y~~1~1~0 ~~2

The next hour was crammed with nothing but uncomfortable glances and an occasional caring squeeze from his sister's hand. Danny had refused to sit beside Vlad, instead sitting cross legged in the living room floor across the table. Every once in a while he would catch the older man giving him calculating looks, like Vlad knew something he did not. He tried his best to completely ignore him and rather gazed at items that wouldn't matter any other day. Least to say that it was extremely awkward to have your arch rival barely two feet away.

However, Danny still wasn't sure what this guy was trying to pull. Vlad had vowed to get revenge against Jack Fenton for hospitalizing him and ruining his life, although has yet to succeed in doing so. Then sabotaged he and his mother's plane over Wisconsin once for a chance to convince them to stay with him and abandon Jack. When that had failed, Vlad released the almighty ghost King Pariah Dark and jeopardized Amity Park. Except, instead of leaving Phantom to die or exposing who he really was to everyone in his unconscious state, Vlad had saved Danny in the aftermath. This created his uncertainty towards the man in front of him at this very moment.

Was he planning payback for all that's happened? He was tentative of what may lay before him. Danny could practically feel the tense air surrounding all three of them. '*Come on Tucker...Sam. Where are you guys at?*' he thought urgently, secretly hoping they would somehow hear him. Maybe they were walking his street right now, slowly making their way around the bend of the sidewalk in which his

house came into clear view. Tucker was telling her about a joke the comedy channel had aired and unintentionally forgot the hilarious punch line. She rolls her purple eyes, obviously not amused at all. Together, they ascend the stone steps and are about to knock...

"How have you been fairing, Danny?" When suddenly the frootloop smashes his nice fantasy with a mallet "I've heard that it's been quite the adventure." Vlad straightened his back, never taking his blue orbs off him.

How dare he even call this an *adventure*! Danny's literally been to hell and back, yet Vlad refers to this as a sort of pleasant journey. Does he not understand exactly how much it ached to be unable to speak? Until two days ago, he was totally convinced that he would be doomed to a life of silence. People around him could speak freely while he had to write every single word down just to be acknowledged. He had never comprehended exactly how precious life was till reality had slapped him in the face and really forced him to change. No average fourteen year old should suffer through such an immense amount of pain and sadness.

Unfortunately, Danny wasn't a normal teenager. Common sense told him that Vlad was playing at his emotions. The main question is, why? He decided that it would be best to just not reply at all. His brows furrowed in anger, hand violently shaking as he grasped the mechanical pencil, never fully meeting Vlad's eyes. The ghost part of him wanted to break out and throw a huge glob of green ectoplasm at the man, in it's place was a broken boy attempting to control his unlimited rage.

'*Don't let him get to you*.'

Vlad continued picking deeper into an already large wound "Honestly, what's the trouble? I just asked you a question."

At last, Jazz whispered two simple words "He's sad."

"Oh?" He leaned forward on his elbows in interest, hands clutched in a fist under his chin "Why is this?"

Danny's sister fixed him in a fierce glare, as if she thought Vlad was unbelievable "Because he's being forced to leave!" Jazz nearly screamed "Why else would he be?" Apparently she wasn't the only one hiding her fury. Vlad seemed somewhat perturbed by her abrupt outburst, his smile widening impossibly further. He was about to respond when there were a few knocks on the front door. Danny immediately jumped up and eagerly opened it to reveal his two best friends.

Tucker grinned at him, trying to hide his gloom "Hey, dude. Sam told me what was going on." he gave Danny a quick knuckle punch before entering. Sam trailed in behind him and took off her shoes in abnormal quietness. He showed them his appreciation by also smiling, holding back the urge to throw his arms around them in a tight hug. Finally they had taken in Vlad's early presence, their faces going dark.

"Hey, Mr. Masters." Sam stumbled over her words "W-What are you doing here?"

Vlad seemed to be intrigued by this whole situation "Of course, I'm here to retrieve young Daniel. Actually," remembrance crossed over his features "Have you put together your bags? We must get going soon."

The goth girl standing beside him desperately held back a sob and folded her thin arms across her torso. Now they were all frowning, a dreary atmosphere replacing the short lived happiness. Danny's heart sank, hot bile tickling the back of his throat as he instantly became sick. Tears threatened to topple over the feeble flood gates built in his eyes. But...he didn't want to leave. He wanted to stay here where people would be there for him no matter what. Where things may not be completely okay, however looked familiar to him and resembled his old life that was lost. None of these comforting qualities awaited him at Vlad's mansion all the way in Wisconsin.

He couldn't stay either. Danny had no other choice but to go with his enemy. The reason? Because he figured that's what his mom and dad wanted. They wished to wake up one day with no problems on their mind and be able to gradually diminish the guilt burdening their breaking hearts. He knew inside that going with Vlad is what they *needed* for their troubled minds. Jack and Maddie would surely mend overtime and come to a decision of whether they wanted to reclaim their son or not. Danny was absolutely positive on this, regardless of what may happen to him while he's away.

Begrudgingly, he began to write upon the paper. His friends and sister all struggled to peer over his shoulders and get a peek at his response. When they finally did, he could have sworn everyone had tears running down their forlorn faces. Danny approached Vlad with a heavy heart and handed him the paper in surrender '*Fine.*'

An arrogant smirk graced his features "I'll wait for you down here."

Danny ascended the stairs one step at a time. When Sam had begun to follow behind him, he had held up his hand and slightly shaken his head. He wasn't certain if he could still go on if they had followed him. More than likely, he would have ended up bawling along with the rest of them. The notepad hung loosely in his hand, Danny's head reeling at a million miles an hour while he pondered if this was the right thing to do. '*Of course it is!*' he thought scornfully '*I'm doing this for mom and dad. Not Vlad, them. I just want them to be happy again.*'

There was little to pack. He didn't doubt that Vlad was already well prepared and had a room ready for him at his mansion. The man had always bewildered him with how much wealth he really owned but refused to tell. Danny took his time, not even caring that Vlad might be late or taking a second to ponder if it was a white lie to rush him out. A worn brown suitcase sat on his bed, filled with necessary clothing that he wore each day and a few pencils in case the one he is currently using broke. He stuck with the only yellow notebook he had carried since returning home that sat near the case.

Before he could close the suitcase, a picture caught his eye. Danny made his way over to the dresser on the other side of the room and picked up a rectangular frame made of wood. What it held within the glass made tears come over his cheeks at last. All four of the Fenton's were present in the photo on the left, with Jack protectively standing over them and their red brick house proudly in the background. Sam and Tucker were standing to the right with Danny himself leaning with his arms across his chest in the middle. The one detail that shocked him the most was that they were all smiling. A real teeth showing, eye twinkling smile. He was definitely taking this with him. It reminded Danny of a portal to the past, only that he wasn't able to just reach in and drag their joy back out to the present.

When everything was ready, he made sure to shut the bathroom door and hide the broken glass scattered amongst the tiles. Danny looked at his room for one more minute, not even out the front door and already homesick. He then saw his parents door and wondered if he should tell them he was leaving or not. '*No, they want to forget-*' he trailed off '*They want to forget me.*' Danny had to come to terms with this. There was no reason to be mad at them any more, for deep inside he understood that they're trying the best they can. It's his fault any of this occurred in the first place.

Jazz, Sam, and even Tucker crowded the lower part of the stairs crying. They all gazed up when Danny began to trudge down, light suitcase in one hand and notebook in the other. Vlad stood expectantly by the door with the knowledge that he had won. Unlike the others, no more tears made their salty paths down his face. Instead, he felt nothing but dread as Danny let himself be hugged by the people he truly loved. No more sorrow, just pain and the sore weight that he was to blame for their sadness. He hated that he could never forgive himself for letting this happen.

Only Vlad spoke through the silence "I've got your bag, little badger." he had taken away Danny's suitcase and opened the front door "Come on, now."

Sam threw her arms around Danny's neck in a last goodbye, slightly surprising him "Please, come back." she whispered in his ear.

To respond, he took the time to retrieve his pencil and write a short note despite Vlad's anxiously tapping foot '*I promise to.*' Danny attempted to give her a reassuring smile before the older man's patience worn out and he placed a hand on his back. Vlad ushered Danny past the door frame and into the yard, where a sleek black limousine was awaiting them at the edge of the sidewalk. It had a long body with at least three tinted windows and silver chrome outlining the front. The owner let go of him and opened the back door, revealing smooth brown leather caressing all the chairs.

Although it was unusually sunny out and quite warm, Danny felt cold. Is today the beginning of a weekend? He knew it was day 110, though other than that he wasn't sure. If so, then he and the others would be out about the town hanging out at the nearby park or spending their money to watch a ridiculous movie right now. Maybe they'd be planning to go ghost hunting tonight. Either way, they enjoyed themselves doing these things. It made them...happy. What would he do without the joy of his friends? Since Jazz just recently found out that he's also Phantom, would she have assisted him in catching the ghosts too? A jolt of regret shot through his heart in realization. Now that he was leaving, they would never be able to do any of those things together again.

He could clearly hear the cries of his loved ones behind him, however did not look back '*I have to stay strong.*' Danny finally faced the open limousine door that Vlad held for him. Hesitation made him pause, understanding that once he got in this vehicle, there was absolutely no turning back. In one swift move he had entered and sat down in the comfy seats. The door slammed shut and somehow managed to increase his hectic nerves. Another sound indicated that Vlad had just taken his position in the driver's seat.

The limousine started, it's engine's vibration stemming to every part of it until it died down to a low rumble. Danny risked looking out the dark windows once and immediately wished he hadn't. Tucker and

Jazz stood in the door frame while Sam was farther out in the front yard with sobs wracking her body. Too soon they began to fade away, smaller and smaller each of them became as Vlad drove farther away. At last there was nothing left of them. He continued to stare out the window in a vain hope that they'd all reappear somewhere to wave goodbye. Buildings passed by in a blur and various citizens roamed the streets with a carefree feeling in their hearts. Once again, Danny found himself uncertain of his future.

Day 110 Part 3

~D~a~y~~1~1~0~~3

But, an uncertain future began to weigh more heavily on his shoulders as his hometown grew farther away. He sagged in the back seat, eyes set outside the window. They had long since left the city behind them, with evergreen trees replacing the familiar buildings that he longed to see once again. The two-way road before them was surrounded by a dark forest, seemingly never ending from Danny's perspective. With the sun's glow dying in the West, the evening sky burst with a thousand sparkling stars above as the night settled in.

Throughout the long six-hour drive, Danny had too much time to think. He continued to roll the situation in his mind until it ached with pins and needles. His heart throbbed painfully in his chest, gripped in an immovable vice as he thought about his friends and family. They were painfully far away, and Danny felt like he could sense the immeasurable distance gaping between them. In fact, they were too far. Too distant to even feel a little hopeful about their reunion.

He had been unintentionally abandoned by his parents. There was no doubt to that now. His condition had clearly overwhelmed his mom and dad, to the point of breaking. They had sent their son away with the best intentions in mind, but, to Danny, he could not bear a moment longer away from them. They were his family, after all, no matter how they had treated him. Deep down, he knew that they still loved him. Behind their fear and anguish, his parents still held some undetermined amount of fondness for their son, even if he had lost his voice. Besides, it was his fault in the first place. He should have told them that he was a half-ghost, especially when he figured out that he could still speak normally in that form.

Would they accept me?

Maybe not. But, he may have better odds taking the risk, rather than wasting away at Vlad Master's home. Speaking of the despicable man, he was still trying to coax Danny into small talk. During the entire drive, he had kept referring to him as his "little badger" and repeatedly discussing how different things would be for him once they arrived in Wisconsin. Danny had tuned him out hours ago.

Despite being ignored, Vlad was persistent. He often piped up to even talk about Danny's family, which infuriated him until every muscle in his body was tense with red hot anger. Still, he absolutely refused to acknowledge the man.

"Oh, you're so childish, Daniel." Vlad muttered under his breath. He sighed in frustration, "Don't worry, we will fix that soon enough."

Danny shivered at the barely concealed threat. It hung in the air like poison, but Vlad had simply tuned into the radio afterwards. That's when Danny knew. It bubbled up in his conscience and burst from within, feeling him with an increasing amount of ice cold terror. His mind flashed back to what Clockwork had said so many days ago: "Even I cannot foresee where all life leads." He paused, "No one can."

This was not how things were meant to be. If Danny laid down and submitted to Vlad's intentions, he would most certainly never return home again. He could even be approaching the dangerous path of becoming Dark Dan. How would he resist such a formidable future with Vlad encouraging him into it for the rest of his life? Although his family and friends were not dead, they were still gone. They were a thousand miles apart with nothing but empty words and promises in between. Vlad would never allow him to go home, and he knew that, instantly, with grave understanding.

The mansion came into view. Its massive windows were lit with the florescent lights that twinkled inside. The site of the place made Danny's galloping heart sink. Vlad, however, simply smiled and said, "Here we are, little badger. Home sweet home."

No, Danny thought, his mind sharp, *Not my home.*

The limousine stopped at the front, where a long pristine staircase rose up to the main door. Vlad turned off the engine and exited the vehicle with a hop in his step. He was obviously looking forward to bringing Danny inside. He even walked to the other side of the limo to open Danny's door for him. He slid out of the seat, his feet landing on the pavement with a foreboding sense of finality.

"Here, let me get your bag." Vlad whisked the case out of Danny's hand in one swift movement.

Danny gazed up at the front door, a tide of emotions and questions pounding through his head. Vlad turned to stand beside him. For a rare, silent moment, they simply stared at the mansion together. Vlad with pride, and Danny in misery.

"It's a lot to take in, is it not?" Vlad asked.

Danny blinked and looked up at him, noting the malicious glint in the other man's eyes. He was frozen as those cold, unfeeling irises planted him to the ground. "I'll take your things in." Vlad pulled the sleeve of his suit up and examined his watch. "Curfew is at eleven, little badger."

Vlad put his foot on the steps, pausing in hesitation. Finally, with a glance over his shoulder at young Danny, who could only watch in awe at this unsympathetic man, he said, "Tomorrow we can get to know each other better," His lips widened in a nasty grin, "*Son*."

He finished his ascent up the steps and disappeared into the home without another word.

Danny stumbled forward and managed to collapse on the second step. He tucked his knees against his chest and hugged them tightly. This was no longer about doing the best for his parents. They had shoved him into the lion's den with false hopes and lies. No, this was about doing the best for himself now. If he dared to pass through

Vlad's door frame, he would never come out the same. He would remain miserable and alone for the rest of his days. He cursed himself for ever complying with the mad man in the beginning. He had only wanted to give his parents relief, but in doing so he had already mingled with Vlad's malevolent plans.

I can't stay here.

It was not an option. He could already feel his wired nerves being flushed with adrenaline. He ran his fingers through his hair in distress. His eyes were wide and alert. He wanted to push his legs into a sprint and run away. But, where would he go? It was too soon for his parents to see him again, he realized. They would only turn him back to Vlad Masters. His friends were young and hiding with them was not an option. He would never put that responsibility on their shoulders. They still had school and family to consider and infringing on their lives would only make things worse.

He sighed. That only left one option.

He stood up and faced the front of the house again. In its shadow, he looked small. Danny managed to smile as he allowed himself to transform into his ghost half. The familiar twin rings spread over his body, completely changing him into Danny Phantom. His eyes lit up when the comforting feeling of black spandex coated his skin, reminding him that he was not powerless. He could change things, he just knew it.

"I never belonged in a mansion anyway." He quipped, before gliding into the night and far, far away from Vlad Masters

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Better seven years late than never?

Day 111

~D~a~y~~1~1~1

Several days had passed since Danny had fled Wisconsin. Although it had only taken less than nine hours to travel in a vehicle, Danny could not possibly fly that far in one night. Shortly pass midnight after he had left, he realized that he still had humanly needs as a ghost. He was beyond tired, especially since he had barely gotten a wink of sleep back home. He had been too stressed about going away to even bother with it. Then, his stomach started to protest, as well as his fatigued muscles.

Just when he was toying with the idea of finding a cozy spot in the woods to sleep, he saw a hazy yellow glow lighting up the sky in the distance. They were most certainly the luminous blaze of a small town. Danny's heart leapt in relief. He pushed himself until he was floating above the desolate town, searching for a hotel to stay in. He hesitated for a long moment, considering his options.

He did not have any money to pay for the things he needed, which included a place to rest and a meal to fill his belly. The mere thought of warm, delicious food made him feel nauseous with hunger. When was the last time he had ate a decent supper anyway? Danny's wondering gaze coasted over a hotel in the distance. Its gigantic, hot pink neon sign lit up half the block. Danny sighed, feeling dispirited by what he was planning to do. He turned intangible and maneuvered closer to the building.

He landed next to a darkened window with broken shades and peeked in. It appeared to be an unoccupied room. He phased through the brick and the window panes without an issue. The shift from chilly Spring weather to a pleasant, warm room was soothing. Danny searched the one room suite once again, but it seemed like no one had rented this room for quite some time. At last, Danny

summoned the transformation rings back, turning him human once again.

Immediately, he felt sick. He coughed and sputtered as his body crumpled over in pain. He managed to somehow shuffle to the bathroom and drop in front of the toilet. The sheer smell of the awful thing made him gag. His body was going through the motions of vomiting, but nothing was coming up. Danny could feel acid swimming in his stomach. He heaved and heaved, then, finally, liquid began to tribble out of his mouth. He forced himself to focus on breathing.

In…out…in…out

After minutes or hours of crouching on the linoleum until his knees were sore, he felt like it was over. Danny wiped his mouth on his sleeve and wobblily climbed to his feet. He flushed the toilet in disgust. The sudden fit had drained his body of whatever energy it had. He was so tired that he could sleep for days. He flicked on the bathroom light nonchalantly, planning on rinsing his feverish face, and stopped.

His dull blue eyes were wide and unmoving. He felt his breath hitch in his throat as he fingered the sleeve of his tee shirt. There, staining the white fabric, was a large blot of blood.

Oh no, what's wrong with poor Danny?

Another short chapter! Last one for tonight. I'm so happy that people still follow this story! I wrote it when I was a kid. I will not be revising my previous chapters. I think little thirteen year-old me had some charm back then.

Day 114

~D~a~y~~1~1~4~

Danny fell into an uneasy slumber. Time passed as he slept, but no one disturbed his room. He was heedless of the passing hours. When he finally managed to crack open his eyes on the one-hundred and fourteenth day, he felt strangely weaker. His mind was fuzzy and when he sat up the walls seemed to spin. Danny blinked hard and tried to refocus his vision. What has happening to him?

He slipped out of the musty covers and stopped to gather his senses. Why was the floor shifting so precariously? He clenched the side of the bed and shook his head. His chest ached, as if it was extremely sore, but he could not recall what would have caused him such pain. His entire body felt like it had been forcibly shoved through a paper presser. He was terribly thirsty.

Stumbling to the bathroom sink, he turned the faucet on and leaned down to lap up the cold water. Once he started drinking, he could not stop. His tongue kept reaching out for more and more, quenching the seemingly insatiable thirst. The water cooled his dry, cracked throat and rested comfortably inside his stomach. He had never been so dehydrated in his entire life. When he was finished, he scooped the water into his palms and splashed his face. His cheeks were unbearably warm.

At last, he gazed at his reflection. He immediately wished he had not. Danny's heart sunk into a woeful stupor as he stared at himself. The gaunt boy in the mirror looked unrecognizable. His pallor was unnaturally pale, and dark purple bags marred his eyes. His black hair was devoid of any luster or life. The sleeve of his shirt was coated in crimson, reminding him of why he hurt all over. The worst were his irises, once cerulean blue with the playful glint of mischief that they always held. Now they were bland of color.

To a stranger's wandering gaze, he would appear to be ill.

Danny held back the hot tears that pressed against his eyes. The longer he observed himself, the more hopeless he began to feel. His human body was deteriorating. He had been continually exposing himself to the radiation, despite the obvious risk to his health. Although his ghost form was undeterred by the disease, his humanoid side unceasingly suffered. What was he to do? He had to find help, and the only person that could possibly understand his situation was Clockwork. He had to get to him before it was too late.

However, there was no chance in hell that he would be using Vlad's portal to reach the Ghost Zone. He would rather die than ever face that man again. There was too much weighing on his survival to attempt returning to Vlad's mansion. His lab was bound to be loaded with traps and security that Danny couldn't possibly even begin to fathom. Plus, the man only had his own interest at heart. No one else mattered to him, especially Danny. Although Vlad acted like he cared, it was an unmistakable cover-up to get closer to him. His sole purpose was to use Danny to his advantage. The thought left a bitter taste in his mouth.

That only left one option: his parents' portal. It had been taped off, but he would bet an entire basket of cheesy puffs that it still worked. The only problem was getting back to Amity Park. It was a long distance away. After all, he had only traveled a couple of hours from Vlad's house.

Suddenly, he was immersed in panic. How long had he been asleep?

He rushed out into the main room, eyes darting around frantically until he spotted a calendar pinned to the opposite wall. It was old fashioned, with a picture of a rustic cabin displaying the current month.

Danny scanned it. He remembered the collection of days that he had kept track of since he had first contracted ghost radiation. They

came to him as easily as breathing. He recalled the exact day he had been forced to leave his home. Then, he glanced at his wrist watch. Its rubber band was fading and torn, but the digital screen flashed the current day and time without issue. He gasped. Three days had passed while he had been sleeping.

He felt like he was paralyzed with fear. What if Vlad had been searching for him this entire time? He could be outside, combing through each building until he found him. If he was caught, Danny was sure that he would lose his chance to find Clockwork. The mere thought that he could be in the same town made Danny want to hurl.

Without wasting time, he transformed into Phantom. Instantly, a wave of normalcy crashed over him. His body was strong and healthy. He was sharper and more aware than he had been in weeks. He grinned at the sensation. No longer were exhaustion and hunger weighing him down. Danny turned intangible before he bolted through the roof. He could not rest until he made it to Clockwork. The all-seeing ghost was his only chance. He had to be able to fix him somehow.

Danny fled the town, and within minutes it was long behind him. He shifted into visibility once he was sure that Vlad was nowhere in sight. The morning sun's glow felt warm and comforting on his skin. The breeze brushed through his hair, and he basked in the familiarity of flying.

I promise things will pick up in the next chapter.

Day 115

~D~a~y~~1~1~5~

Danny stood invisible on the sidewalk, gazing up at the building that he had once lovingly called his home. The Fenton Works sign was dim and unused. All the curtains were drawn tight, except for the window that lead to his older sister's bedroom. The house that he had spent his childhood in was now a foreboding place, haunted by the memories of his parents' grim faces. He thought of Jazz first. Danny knew that she would usually be at the library at this time, habitually studying for final exams that were still months away. If things were normal, his mom would be in the kitchen, cooking an evening meal for her children and avoiding her husband's odd experiments in the fridge. His dad should be in the basement, tinkering with his latest contraption in the lab.

Above, thunder roared, followed by a flash of fierce lightening. A storm was brewing. Black clouds were gathering in the sky, bathing the whole city in gray. The wind shook the trees and their over turned leaves, their creamy undersides facing the heavens as they anticipated the oncoming rain. Danny shivered, his hair wild in the breeze. The approaching downpour seemed synchronized with the monsoon of emotions that clustered inside his chest. He wanted nothing more than to change back to his human half and rap on the entrance door. He wished to be embraced by the welcoming arms of his parents.

Instead, he phased through the front of the house. He was soundless as he glided through the empty living area, and right into the lab. The walls were bereft of their usual ectoplasm smears. There were dozens of oozing boxes piled high in the corners, half packed and covered in a thin layer of dust. The portal, which usually lit up the room in an eerie green glow, was closed against the opposite wall. Danny landed in front of the portal, grim, yet

determined. He tore down the black and yellow caution tape that covered the twin doors.

To the right of the portal, a metal box held the switch that would reactivate it. Only Jack Fenton had the key to unlock the box, but Danny simply phased his hand through the metal and pulled the switch upward. The mysterious inner workings of the ghost portal groaned as it ignited to life. The hatch yawned open and, within the chamber, a spark flickered. It grew into a tremendous light, and Danny had to squeeze his eyes shut tight in its sudden blindness. When he reopened them, the entrance to the ghost zone was alive. Its colors ebbed and waned in a vicious circle of various dark and light greens. It beckoned Danny to step inside.

He inhaled deeply. His heart pounded in his chest as he realized that this was his last chance. If Clockwork could not help him, then no one could.

Clockwork's great tower was an enigma to behold. It resembled a giant clock, with a pendulum balanced in the middle that ticked back and forth. The wise man's residence itself was suspended on an island, surrounded by odd machinery. Flags dotted the towers that arose from its high surfaces and branched out into the abyss. Two wooden doors marked with intricate metal designs marked the only way in or out of Clockwork's sanctuary.

Danny landed in front of them with a finality that made his chest sink. This was the end of the line.

He pried open one of the doors, just enough to allow him to slip past. It shut behind him with ease. The chamber was animated with the off-key ticking of hundreds of clocks. They were all of different designs from many, many eras, some of which Danny had never seen before. The clocks lined the walls and hovered in the air above, far too high for him to even begin to count them. At the front of the room, four glass mirrors stretched out from the floor. He approached

them cautiously, abruptly afraid that something menacing would jump through their quivering screens.

"Daniel."

He flinched as the old man's voice echoed in the chamber. Danny turned around, and Clockwork was before him. The ghost had adopted the form of a withered man, with pale skin and wrinkles lining his omniscient red eyes. He was adorned in his usual violet cloak. A pendulum hung behind the glass that lay within his chest. His gnarled fingers were curled atop of his long, strange staff.

Danny sucked in his breath, prepared to explain everything to the ghost. Then, he deflated just as quickly. Clockwork already knew why he was there. It could be the only explanation to the man's calm composure. Instead of bothering with the formalities, he decided to ask the single question that had bothered him for weeks on end.

"Can you fix me, Clockwork?"

The ghost's gaze turned somber as he glided forward, closing the gap between Danny and himself. He looked down at the younger boy, placing a gentle hand on his shoulder.

"No, Daniel." He said, his eyes never leaving Danny's.

Danny pulled away in horror. His legs trembled, and he collapsed to his knees in a heap. Hot, fresh tears fell down his face unbidden. The overwhelming sadness and frustration that he felt was insurmountable.

"You have to be able to do something!" Danny yelled, his voice broken by sobs. "Can't you do anything, Clockwork?"

Clockwork simply shook his head in reply. "You are not broken, child." He whispered, crouching down in front of Danny's shaking, curled body. "There is nothing to fix here."

Danny's head snapped up. "Nothing to fix?" He spat in disbelief. "I can feel my human half slipping away. Every time I turn back, I can feel my bones burning! My family hates me. Vlad is out god knows where, looking for me!" He pressed his hands against his ears and continued to break down. "What about that is fine?" He howled.

In an instant, his life seemed to flash through his mind, like a movie reel playing too fast. He thought about Casper High's familiar hallways and likable teachers, his dream of becoming an astronaut one day. Sam's appeared with her pleated boots and purple lip gloss that made him ache with longing. Such simple, everyday things that made Sam her lovable, goth self that Danny had taken for granted. He saw her warm, playful smile that he had imagined kissing when he was alone.

Tucker's loyal friendship; their best nights together spent playing video games and bickering over movies. Jazz's sweet demeanor, always there for her little brother despite absolutely everything that could have possibly come between them. Danny yearned for her overprotectiveness right then. He wanted her to sweep in and hold him tight and block out the world.

Then, his mom and dad bubbled up into the forefront of his thoughts, and he cried even harder. Their faces were free of worry and sleeplessness. His mom was always pestering him about eating healthier food. He could hear her kind words and support when she somehow knew that he had had a rough day. He could feel himself embraced in one of her sweetened, rare hugs, where they entwined as a loving mother and her only son.

His dad had never been put down by anything, even when the situation was dire. He had always put on the biggest smile for his family. His careless acts managed to make them laugh in glee, and he had never mocked his children in a bad way before. Danny thought about when they would try to hunt his phantom counterpart, and how he had constantly twisted it into some kind of game between himself and them. He felt sickened that they would never

know what was really making him sick; that it was never really their fault.

He squeezed his fists shut tight. He should have never let them take the blame.

Two cold hands encased his own. Danny looked up at Clockwork, who was now in his most common form: a broad-shouldered young man. The ghost sat before him, his once wispy tail now contorted into a pair of human-like legs. They were crossed in front of him, allowing him to properly sit right at Danny's level.

"Time is not a variable, Daniel." Clockwork spoke, his tone mournful. "It is not spontaneous, nor does it ever turn backwards. It is simply existent, like every living being. It only continually moves forward."

Danny paused to think, wondering if he even had the strength to speak anymore. He felt hopeless and lost. But, his curiosity peaked, and his feeble voice rose again. "Are you saying…" He gulped, the weight in his throat unbearable as more tears threatened to fall. "This was meant to happen?"

Clockwork nodded, silent. Danny balked and covered his mouth, trying in disdain to hold back the sobs that wracked him. All his hope dissipated into nothingness. His chest was heavy with grief.

"You're dying, Daniel."

There it was: the word he had been too scared to utter himself. He was dying. He would die, soon. His time was already thinned out. He could feel his human half deteriorating, as if he was detached from himself at an incredible distance. His muscles were overused and weakened beyond belief, his stomach was nauseous from sheer starvation; when was the last time he had ate? He panicked; he had not had the time. He had flown straight from Wisconsin to home without a single bit of sustenance to keep himself from the brink of death. Had he rested properly, would he have more days, or were

they numbered regardless of what he tried to do? Could he have done something to stop it from ever happening?

He had to voice his concern to Clockwork. "Could I have prevented this?"

"Ultimately, you were always meant to become Danny Phantom. This course of your life leads you to contracting a sickness that will end with your demise. Nothing could have prevented this, Daniel. You never failed to step into your parent's portal on that one fateful day."

Danny's head hung limp, but Clockwork pushed his chin up to face him. He had a slight, encouraging smile. "Think of all the people you have saved, the family and friends that have supported you." His eyes twinkled in kindness. "You have suffered for far too long, child. It is time for you to finally rest."

Danny stared into those eyes like they were a lifeline. He had never felt so close to the ghost before. "How long do I have?"

Clockwork stood, his hand outstretched to Danny. He took it in his own, and the ghost pulled him to his feet. "Long enough to say goodbye."

I apologize if there are any inconsistencies with this story, compared to the show. I haven't watched it in quite a while. I want to finish this fic before I wait too long and lose interest again. There will be one more chapter, as well as an epilogue, before it is finally complete.

Day 115 Part 2

~D~a~y~~1~1~5~~2

It was the easiest choice of his entire life. Danny hesitated in front of the door to his house once again, his hand hovering inches away from its surface. He tried to remember what Clockwork had told him.

"*When its done, I'll be there for you."*

There were voices beyond the entrance; his parents were home, just like the time ghost had assured him.

Danny breathed, then knocked before he lost his nerve.

The door swung open, "Hello?" Maddie called, her voice a whisper in the wind. She gasped.

Then, Danny closed his eyes and allowed his control to finally slip away. In seconds, twin rings formed around his waist. They moved synchronously across his body, replacing his black spandex suit with his plain white tee and blue jeans. When he reopened his eyes, they were pale and unfocused.

"*They have always loved you, Daniel."*

All at once, a thousand pangs of agony popped over his every muscle and nerve. He groaned as his head became lighter. He toppled forward, ready to hit the stairs, but a pair of arms caught him instead. His mother's chest was heaving in sobs. Danny tried to swallow, but his throat felt constricted. Tear drops were falling on his face, cascading down his cheeks. He opened his mouth to comfort his mom. Only a strangled whimper came out.

His sight blurred with the familiar hues of orange, blue, and black. A high pitch siren assaulted his ears. He was distantly aware that he

was quickly losing consciousness. And, although his life was hanging on a thin thread, he managed to smile in relief.

They knew.

He reawakened in a bright white room that he immediately recognized as the hospital. His parents were sitting in chairs beside him, with his mother holding his hand tightly. Sam, Tucker, and Jazz stood on the opposite side, their faces drawn into mourning. He wanted to lift his head and say something, but he had lost his voice the moment he had turned back into his human half.

However, his dad noticed that he was awake. A fresh wave of tears coated his face. Jack leaned forward and covered his wife's hand with his own. Maddie's neck snapped up when it dawned on her that her son was awake.

"Oh, Danny!" She cried, springing forward to embrace him. "I'm so sorry!" She sobbed into his shoulder, repeating the apology over and over, her entire body shaking in distress.

He attempted to raise his arms to hug her back, but his limbs were too weak. Danny focused all his effort into moving his muscles, and they never budged. He inhaled, dismayed to discover that even the air seemed thinner than usual. His heart felt like it was beating too slow. There was a machine next to the bed, counting every pulse. Its flickering green lights reminded him of the ghost zone. He found that he was fond of the color. It seemed to be apart of everything that he had ever known.

His thoughts reoriented themselves as his mom pulled away. She was still mumbling her apologies from afar. Jack rubbed her back absently, lost in his own grief. He gazed at his son, as if he was seeing him for the very first time. Danny looked up at his friends. Sam's black mascara was pouring down her cheekbones in rivulets. She was clutching a wad of tissues. Her purple polish was chipping from her nails. Tucker had removed his cap from his head, his

attention stuck to the floor. Danny stared at him carefully, wondering if his closest childhood friend would be the same techno geek after he was gone.

Suddenly, he could feel an oncoming coughing fit bubbling up his itchy throat. He sputtered and gagged, feeling something hot and wet dribble down his lips. Jazz, his sweet older sister, rushed forward to hold him. That's the point when he could no longer hold back. The tears came forth as his sister's hair brushed against his cheeks. The strands smelled like violets and honey. He breathed it in deeply, savoring its comforting scent. Jazz leaned back, and his vision flickered in warning. Dark, fuzzy spots were dancing across the room.

Jazz combed her fingers through his hair. "Everything's going to be okay." She whispered.

Danny relaxed into the sheets of the bed, ready to close his eyes. In the darkness, he was overwhelmed with an abrupt happiness that he had not expected. It was as if all his problems and worries had faded away in an instant. He was filled with content.

"The fight is over, Daniel." Clockwork's soothing voice floated through the air. His eyelids fluttered open.

He was hovering above his body, but it did not look like the Daniel Fenton that he longed to remember from his carefree days. In fact, he thought that he appeared to be quite dead. His lax face was hollow and pale in the sunlight that broke through the clouds. He was surrounded by the heartbroken howls of his family and friends. He winced, glancing at Clockwork. The time ghost was hovering at the windows, looking out at Amity Park as the sun rose over the horizon and painted the sky.

Danny floated towards him, dressed in the clothing that he had passed in. He lingered next to Clockwork in silence. The sunrise was beautiful, and it seemed unkind to deny the other ghost some pleasant company on such a stunning morning. They drifted side-by-

side, sharing the new day together. Danny's gaze flicked back to the gathering at his bedside.

"How are you feeling?" Clockwork asked.

Danny turned back to him and thought about it, slowly turning his newfound feelings over in his head. He had never felt so well. "I'm sad…" He started, rubbing his chin. "But, happy, too." He said with a shrug. Then, he laughed at how ridiculous that sounded. Something so small and stupid to find enjoyment in but, then again, he could not recall the last time he had ever felt so free.

Clockwork's lips lifted in a light grin. "Have you thought it over, then?"

Danny stretched his arms over his head, revitalized with fresh energy. "Yup. You're stuck with me now."

The ghost nodded in understanding. Danny scoffed at him. He knew that he was only being stubborn. He had seen Clockwork's shoulders visibly straighten, as if a weight had been lifted from them. He wondered if the ghost had been concerned about his answer.

Once again, he looked back at the scene unfolding behind them. There were several nurses in the room. A nice blonde with rosy red cheeks was consoling his mother. Another woman with dark skin and pursed lips was lifting a blanket over Danny's corpse. Sam had collapsed onto the floor, unmoving. Tucker stood away from the group, his head in his hands. Jazz held onto her father in a tight embrace.

Danny suddenly wished that he could speak to them, but Clockwork had already grounded him with a firm grasp on his shoulder. Danny peered back at him, and there was sympathy in his red irises.

"You must never go to them, Daniel." Clockwork said. "Your presence would only make their grief worse. They must have time to mourn."

Danny watched them. He felt removed from the situation. His mind was strangely at ease while they openly grieved. "Will they ever move on, Clockwork?"

Clockwork's eyes glinted with a hint of knowing. "All things heal with time, Daniel."

Don't worry, its not really the end! Epilogue incoming soon!

Day ?

~D~a~y~~?~

Under the guidance of Clockwork, Danny thrived in the afterlife. He often tried to refrain from ever referring to his passing as his "death," because it did not seem that way to him. Honestly, he had never felt so alive before. Clockwork had offered to take Danny under his wing, mere hours before he died. And how could he have ever said no to the time ghost? He had few allies in the ghost zone, and most of them had wanted to disintegrate him when he had been alive, so it seemed the best option at the time. Thus far, he had never regretted it.

Clockwork became more open to him slowly. The ancient ghost was not accustomed to company. Many months passed before he even decided to begin teaching the boy. He sat with Danny often, educating him in various lectures each day, none the same as the last. At first, he taught him a basic array of subjects that Danny would have eventually grown into in school. However, just as Danny had found those things uninteresting in life, they were even more so in death.

"What kind of ghost teaches calculus anyway?" Danny would groan, his head in his hands.

Clockwork would smile despite himself, until he finally agreed to drop those tedious subjects. He had to admit that the boy was right in some respects. Instead, he started to explain to the young ghost about his work. Danny's eyes had lit up at the prospect of learning about the time stream. Clockwork showed him the individual lives that people lead, and how their choices often affected them greatly, for better or worse. He told him about the Observants, the mysterious one-eyed beings that observed both the human world and the ghost zone. He taught Danny the importance of time, and how precious it truly is.

Sometimes, Danny would wander out of the ghost zone and into the land of the living, where he would watch his family and friends from a distance.

His mother and father never stopped grieving over the loss of their son, but they were gradually figuring out how to live again in the process. They sold all their inventions intended for hunting ghosts to pick up and move elsewhere, into the quiet streets of a cozy town far away from Amity Park. There, they reconciled their adoration for one another. They used their knowledge to create new machinery, and companies were thrilled to line up and pay the highest price. The Fenton name became a staple in America and, although things were better, they continued to take life only one day at a time. Sometimes, his mother would still break down and cry.

Jazz went to her dream university shortly after his passing. Of course, she excelled in school. She even gained a permanent spot on the Dean's list. She focused all her time into her studies, which consisted of childcare and therapy. She wanted to be a psychologist, and Danny thought that the position would suit her far too well. He often reminisced about their time together when he was around her. Despite how much his sister's psychological babble had annoyed him, he knew that she had only said certain things to try to help him. At night, she sat alone in her dorm and ached for her little brother. She often cried until she fell asleep.

He even decided to check in on Vlad's whereabouts on very rare occasions. The old man was as bitter as he had always been. He lived alone with his cat in his mansion, often reading or scheming in his personal lab. Danny did not dare to follow the man to his basement laboratory. He was too frightened by thoughts of being trapped inside it's walls, sealing him away from Clockwork's reach forever. He knew that Vlad would enjoy nothing more than torturing him in death. Maybe he'd even keep him as a prized trophy, if he could ever catch him. Danny would never give him the chance. One day, Danny stopped visiting him altogether. He cared nothing for

Vlad's malicious plans, and he had always harbored some hatred for the man for trying to ruin his life.

He spent more time watching over Sam and Tucker instead, who both handled Danny's passing separately. Sam poured over old photographs of all three of them together. In the dead of night, she would walk on her own to the park and gaze at the stars. Danny couldn't help but wonder what she was thinking about in those delicate moments. Then, Tucker started joining her on those silent nights. He talked about growing up in school with Danny when they were kids, and how overtaken with affection they both were when Sam joined their fifth-grade class. They both had had a bet on who would date her first.

Sam laughed, her eyes alight with mischief as Tucker told her all about their grade school thoughts of her. "Wow, I didn't know I was such a hot topic."

Tucker smiled and waved his hand dismissively. "That's only the tip of the iceberg."

Their smiles waned as they leaned back and spotted a single shooting star. It was a crisp evening. The crescent moon glowed brighter as the sun's rays turned the sky into a watercolor painting of dark purple hues. The clouds were bright pink.

"So, who would you have chosen?" Tucker asked.

Sam's eyebrows scrunched together in confusion. "What do you mean?"

"Between me and Danny," he said, his gaze back on the stars. "Who would you have dated?"

She blinked in surprise and turned her head away. A faint rosy blush covered her cheeks. "It was always him." She whispered. Her eyes glazed over with unshed tears.

Danny left them alone; he never wanted to see her cry.

As they aged, their nightly meetings together in the park never ended. Sometimes they would eat take out together with a pack of cheap alcohol from the nearest gas station, simply talking through the evening in each other's company. When they graduated from high school, Danny was disheartened that their nocturnal outings abruptly ended. Tucker wanted to start his bachelor's degree in computer information systems at a distant community college, and Sam wished to be a tattoo artist. They parted ways with promises to see one another again someday.

At that point, Danny knew that life had moved on without him, regardless of his death. He felt strangely forgotten and left out. He took his time returning to Clockwork's tower, lost in his aimless thoughts. Death had treated him well, but life had arguably been even better. Sam's honest confession of love made his chest feel strange. He suddenly longed to be alive, just so he could be apart of her life again.

Before he could hideaway in a room on his own, Clockwork had caught him in the entrance hall. The familiar ticking of a thousand clocks was somewhat comforting to him.

"What's bothering you, Daniel?" Clockwork asked, his face edged with concern.

Danny bunched his hands together. He had never told Clockwork about his ventures out of the ghost zone. Although the older ghost had not prohibited him from ever leaving, he imagined that Clockwork would object to him watching over his family and friends.

He turned away from him and tried to ignore the miserable feelings causing his chest to ache. However, Clockwork was not one to let Danny bury himself in such resentment alone. He put his gloved hands on Danny's shoulders and spun him back around to face him.

"I already know." He whispered.

A small sob cut through Danny's throat. All at once, he was crying into Clockwork's cloak. "A-Are you disappointed?"

Clockwork shushed him, rubbing gentle circles into his back. "No, Daniel. I knew that you weren't ready to leave them behind. But," he added, prying the boy from his chest so that he could look at him firmly. "You have to stop obsessing over their lives now. They're moving on."

For some reason, that only hurt Danny more than before. Not because Clockwork was being unhelpful or mean, but that his friends were prepared to continue living on without him. "I was never ready to let go." He hiccupped and wiped his cheeks with the back of his hand. He felt utterly lost for the first time since he had died. It hadn't been so bad to watch his loved ones from beyond the grave, until too much time had begun to pass. Then his parents appeared too old and his friends became the adults that he would never be.

"Do you remember what I told you, Daniel?" Clockwork asked, smoothing out Danny's hair. He had never expected to grow so close to another being. Yet, here he was with an apprentice, who he had fondly begun to treat as his own son. "Everything heals with time." He laid his palm over Danny's stagnant heart. "Including you." He hugged him tightly to his chest. "It may take ages, but you will heal, my child."

Danny cried, doubtful that he could ever forget the life that he had once lived.

At the same time, Clockwork silently vowed that he would never leave the boy's side.

Author's Note

To everyone that favorited, reviewed, and followed this story: you're awesome!

I was amazed and overwhelmed with joy that this old story still has dedicated followers.

I started writing Mean What You Can't Say when I was thirteen years-old. Now, as a twenty-year-old college student, it is finally finished. I hope that the ending was satisfying.

When I originally started this story in 2011, I had plans to delve into an intense character study between Vlad and Danny. I admit that I was greatly inspired by the fic "Checkmate" by pearl84. It would have probably been a very long, drawn out story if I had run with that plot bunny. When I picked this back up, I pretty much tossed that idea aside. I wanted to give my followers a somewhat satisfying ending that would correlate with the story I had written. I admit that it could have been better, but I wanted to finish this before I potentially lost interest again. I admit, I'm not very good at writing long chapter stories nowadays.

Once again, thank you all. I will continue writing more stories to publish in the future. I read every single review, and they always make my day! Thank you for following Danny's long ride through life and death.